The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East

Religions in the Graeco-Roman World

Editors

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The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods

Edited by

Ted Kaizer

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ABBREVIATIONS

AÉ	*Année épigraphique*
ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Berlin, 1972-)
BÉ	*Bulletin épigraphique* (published in *Revue des études grecques*)
BMC Arabia	G.F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia in the British Museum* (London, 1922)
BMC Palestine	G.F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Palestine in the British Museum* (London,1914)
BMC Phoenicia	G.F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phoenicia in the British Museum* (London, 1910)
BMC Roman Empire	H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* (London, 1910-)
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum,* series Latina (Turnhout)
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
CIS	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*
CPJ	V. Tcherikover, A. Fuks and M. Stern (eds.), *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* I-III (Cambridge, Mass., 1957-64)
CRAI	Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres, *Comptes rendues*
CSCO	*Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*
CUF	*Collection des universités de France* (Paris)
DDD	K. van der Toorn, B. Becking and P.W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden, 1995; 1999^2)
FGrH	F. Jacoby (ed.), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden, 1923-)
H1,2,etc.	Inscriptions from Hatra; same numbering adopted by Vattioni (1981); id. (1994); Aggoula (1991); Beyer (1998)

I.Ephesos	H. Wankel e.a. (eds.), *Die Inschriften von Ephesos. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* (Bonn, 1979-)
IGLS	L. Jalabert, R. Mouterde e.a., *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (Paris: Geuthner, 1929-)
Inv.	J. Cantineau e.a., *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* I-XII (Beirut/Damascus, 1930-1975)
IScM	*Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae* (Bucarest, 1975-)
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich, 1981-)
PAM	*Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, published by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, Warsaw University
PAT	D.R. Hillers and E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (Baltimore–London, 1996)
PAAES	*Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899-1900* (New York): R. Garrett, I: *Topography and Itinerary* (1914); H.C. Butler, II: *Architecture and Other Arts* (1903); W.K. Prentice, III: *Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (1908); E. Littman, IV: *Semitic Inscriptions* (1904).
PUAES	*Syria: Publications of Princeton University Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1904-1905 and 1909* (Leiden): H.C. Butler, F.A. Norris and E.R. Stoever, I: *Geography and Itinerary* (1930); H.C. Butler, II.A-B: *Architecture* (1907-20); E. Littman e.a. and W.K. Prentice, III.A-B: *Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (1907-22); E. Littman, IV.A-D: *Semitic Inscriptions* (1914-49)
RE	*Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaften* (Stuttgart, 1894-)
Rep. I-IX	M. Rostovtzeff e.a. (eds.), *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Reports* (New Haven, 1929-1952)
RES	*Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique* I-VII (Paris, 1900-1950)

RPC	A. Burnett e.a., *Roman Provincial Coinage* (London–Paris): I. *The Julio Claudian Period* (1992, 1998[2]); II. *The Flavians* (1999); Suppl. I (1998)
Schürer, *HJP*	E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC-AD 135)*, I-II rev. ed. by G. Vermes and F. Millar, III rev. ed. by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman (Edinburgh, 1973-87)
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Amsterdam, 1923-)

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LXXVI Life-size statue of princess Dushfari from Temple 5. Drawing © L. Dirven.

INTRODUCTION

TED KAIZER

unicuique etiam provinciae et civitati suus deus est
[Tert., *Apol.* 24.7]

Each individual region, each locality, had its own god. The above statement by Tertullian, writing at the end of the second century AD, is a key example of the simplified treatment that religious life in the Hellenistic and Roman Near East so often suffered at the hands of Christian and other literary sources. Whereas the Norici, inhabiting the Eastern Alps, are said to have Belenus as their chief deity and Africa her 'heavenly virgin', Syria is linked by the church father to the goddess Astartes and Arabia to the god Dusares. Similar accounts were apparently very popular. The so-called *Oration of Melito the Philosopher*, an early Syriac text pretending to be a Christian speech addressed to a Roman emperor, contains an enigmatic passage that details which deities received worship in specific areas and places. The largest section deals with the Near East, especially with Byblos in Phoenicia and Mabog/Hierapolis (the city better known as that of the Syrian goddess) in the north: the Phoenicians worship Belti, 'queen of Cyprus', and at Hierapolis Nebu and Hadaran are identified with Orpheus and the Persian magian Zaradusta. A later example, Jacob of Sarug's sixth-century homily *On the Fall of the Idols*, has Satan placing Antioch under the protection of Apollo, Edessa under that of Nebu and Bel, Harran under that of Sin, Baal-Shamin and some other divinities, and so forth.[1]

This 'fractionation' of divine worship in the Near East as propagated by the literary sources did of course not reflect the cultic realities on the ground. It was well known that the cults of individual gods and goddesses were not restricted to particular places only and, instead, most of the 'local' deities were worshipped throughout the

[1] For the relevant Melito passage, with a translation, see now Kaizer (2006a), p.32-5. A full-scale commentary is in preparation by Jane Lightfoot. For Jacob of Sarug's discourse, see still Martin (1875).

wider region. Notwithstanding this, it has proven hard indeed for modern scholars to distinguish a 'Near Eastern religion' along the lines of 'Greek religion' or 'Roman religion'. The religious cultures of the many cities, villages and regions that constituted the Hellenistic and Roman Levant were, despite some obvious similarities, above all very different from each other. Places such as Antioch, Palmyra, Dura-Europos, Edessa, Hatra, Petra, Gerasa and other Decapolis cities, and the various settlements on the Phoenician coast, could indeed share some of the same gods, rituals, or religious architecture. But there were also fundamental differences as to their respective patterns of worship, as the most basic sketch of the relevant material immediately reveals, and this cannot solely be attributed to an imbalance in spread of evidence.

A Bird's-eye View of Local Religious Life in the Near East

In each individual place the particular multitude of divine names present, the local mythological and other traditions, and the way in which the various temples and sanctuaries relate to each other from a topographical perspective, combine to create a unique religious world. For some regions, however, the evidence is far better than for others. It is probably fair to speculate, for example, that Antioch, whose scant remains from the Roman period do not reflect its status as one of the empire's largest cities, must have known the buzzing activities of standard Greek *polis* cults, with some more 'Oriental' forms of worship being practised outside the civic context. But here, as elsewhere in the North-Syrian tetrapolis (Antioch, Apamea and the port cities Laodicea and Seleucia ad Pieria), there is very limited epigraphic evidence to confirm the coexistence of Graeco-Roman and non-Classical cults, and only the rural temples from the tetrapolis' hinterland, the Limestone Massif, show—though through Greek inscriptions—how its inhabitants worshipped gods whose very names (e.g. Zeus Madbachos, from the Aramaic *dbk*, 'to sacrifice') reveal them as indigenous.[2] In sharp contrast to the 'Greek' tetrapolis, which consisted of Hellenistic foundations, two other sites in north-

[2] On the temples in the Limestone Massif, and their relation to Antioch and the cities of the tetrapolis, see Callot and Marcillet-Jaubert (1984); Millar (1993), p.250-6; Strube (1996); Kreuz (2003). See Milette Gaifman's paper, p. 56.

ern Syria had a public image which was very non-Classical: Hierapolis, the 'holy city' known as Bambyce or Mabog amongst the locals, and residence of the Syrian goddess Atargatis whose local cult was made the subject of the most important treatise on Near Eastern religion in the Roman period, *On the Syrian Goddess* (see below); and Doliche, home of a toponymic weather-god who under the name of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus (IOMD) became extremely popular amongst soldiers anywhere in the Roman empire.[3]

As for the cities on the Phoenician coast, the Phoenician roots of their divine worlds continued—in different degrees—to be present in the imperial period: Heracles, widely known at least since Herodotus (II.44) as the Greek interpretation of the Phoenician Melqart, remained the dominant figure of the divine world of Tyre, and the large Phoenician temple of Belti (or Balaat Gebal, 'mistress of Byblos') in Byblos was still occupying its original position in Roman times.[4] Even in Berytus, the "unique island of Roman culture in the Near East", with its typically colonial priesthoods and civic institutions, indigenous (alongside Greek) forms of worship shone through the Latinized religion of the *colonia*, although some of the deities worshipped at Berytus at least gave the impression of indeed being real imports.[5] In the Beqa'a valley to the east of the Lebanon mountains, at Baalbek-Heliopolis (which for a time belonged to the district of Berytus) the local Baal or Zeus took over the epithets of the main god of the Roman pantheon (in a process similar to that at Doliche), resulting in a name often abbreviated in inscriptions to IOMH, Jupiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus.[6] The monumental remains of his sanctuary with the well-preserved temple of another deity adjacent to it, which are amongst the most evocative ruins of the Roman Near East, were partly built by regional tetrarchs and dynasts in the first century BC, partly also when the temple complex formed part of the territory of the *colonia* Berytus, with further additions by local

[3] See now Schütte-Maischatz and Winter (2004).

[4] Tyre: Bonnet (1988); Byblos: Dunand (1973), p.62-3. Cf. Millar (1983) and id. (1993), p.264-95.

[5] Millar (1990), p.10-23. The quotation is from id. (1993), p.279. On the alleged 'import' of deities into colonial Berytus, see also Kaizer (2005).

[6] The main collection of material, though not always interpreted with care, is the trilogy by Hajjar, (1977) and (1985). Cf. Haider (2002).

dignitaries and others in the second and third centuries, such as the altar structure and the entrance gates.[7]

To the south, the sanctuaries belonging to the rural communities on Mt Hermon, which is the subject of the contribution by Julien Aliquot, form an excellent test case of the role village temples could come to perform in providing a platform for the elites in the cities' hinterlands (in this case territories of Damascus, Sidon and Paneas) to vie for attention and to present their newly-created identities. Another well-documented area is that of the hill-country of the Hauran, situated 100 km southeast of Damascus, which is subject to an architectural study by Arthur Segal in this volume. In the past, the villages of the Hauran have been specifically investigated with a view towards their administration, showing how these 'mini-cities', notwithstanding a past that included a Nabataean period, conducted their public life in Greek. But the only full-scale study of the Hauran's religious life, by Dominique Sourdel in 1952, reveals a divine world made up of deities some of which were indigenous, some Greek, and others coming from other spheres of influence.[8] Most other rural regions are, unfortunately, not that well illuminated by surviving evidence, and one might wonder how much better the sometimes prosaic evidence from other rural regions could be interpreted if these had the benefit of their own Josephus, considering how the latter brings to the fore many otherwise unknown aspects of village life in the Galilee in the context of his narrative of the Jewish war.[9]

The lands of Judaea, homeland of Judaism, naturally produced their own unique assemblages of local religious life, with places on the Palestinian coast such as Ascalon and Gaza still firmly in the hands of indigenous gods worshipped in Greek, for example the dominant cult of Zeus Marnas at Gaza.[10] If the most complete *model* of a Near Eastern form of religious life is actually that centered around the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem, thanks to the abundance of literary sources, especially Josephus, this unique model of a mono-

[7] Van Ess and Weber (1999); Ruprechtsberger (1999).

[8] Sourdel (1952).

[9] For an attempt to draw together the evidence for rural temples in the Roman Near East, see now Steinsapir (2005).

[10] Mussies (1990). On pagan cults in Roman Palestine in general, see Belayche (2001).

theistic system cannot be easily applied to the evidence from elsewhere concerning polytheistic cults. The case of the cities of the Samaritans stands on its own too, as is made clear by Jonathan Kirkpatrick's contribution to this volume, and despite the fact that most academic and other attention has gone to the temple on Mt Gerizim as a rival to the Temple in Jerusalem, the pagan presence on the mountain ought not to be ignored.[11] The cities of the Syrian Decapolis—a loose group of cities, only nominally ten, east of the Jordan valley (with the exception of Nysa-Scythopolis), ranging from Hippos and Dion in the north towards Philadelphia (Amman) in the south—presented a public façade of religious life which was Greek, though further investigation leads to the observation that behind this façade the remnants of a different religious world were lurking.[12] This is visible not solely through rather obvious media, such as a couple of Greek inscriptions from Gerasa recording dedications to *Theos Arabikos* or to an unknown deity called Pakeidas, an inscription found at Hippos-Susita (also in Greek) dedicating an altar to the main Nabataean god Dusares, not to speak of a graffito in Thamudic, from Gerasa's territory, invoking the Edomite god Qos,[13] but even in the most Graeco-Roman of all media, that of the cities' civic coinage. The paper by Achim Lichtenberger in this volume is a case in point, as it argues how an exploration of the issues of Gerasa, in all outward appearances a 'Classical' city, reveals non-Classical, indigenous, traces of religious life. But an even clearer example can be found at Adra'a, a Decapolis city which in the second century produced coins showing an aniconic image with accompanying legend acclaiming it as 'Dusares, god of the Adraènoi' (Δουσάρης θεὸς Ἀδραηνῶν).[14]

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[11] Cf. Breytenbach (1997), who does not, however, pay sufficient attention to the archaeological context.

[12] The standard work on religion in the Decapolis is now Lichtenberger (2003). Cf. Kaizer (2004b) and the unpublished thesis by Riedl (2003). On the location of Dion, to be identified with Tell al-Ashari, see now Kropp (2006).

[13] *Theos Arabikos* and Pakeidas at Gerasa: Kraeling (1938), p.384-6, n^{os}19-22, and p.383-4, n^{os}17-18 respectively. Dusares at Hippos: Ovadiah (1981). Qos in the territory of Gerasa: Knauf (1981).

[14] Spijkerman (1978), p.60-1, n^{os}1-3. The exclusion of Adra'a, and indeed other cities whose evidence reveals different spheres of influence, by Lichtenberger (2003) in his discussion of the Decapolis may have given too strong an impression of cultural cohesion between the cities actually dealt with in his book, see Kaizer (2004c). Cf. M. Gaifman's paper in this volume, at p.57-9.

The relatively abundant sources from Palmyra, located at an oasis in the middle of the Syrian steppe, halfway between Damascus and the Euphrates river, make it a prime test case for the study of local religious life in the Classical Levant. The caravan station was "the only publicly bilingual city"[15] in the region—not only according to its multitude of inscriptions honouring local and other benefactors in both Greek and a local dialect of Aramaic, but also as regards some aspects of its coinage[16]—and the divine world followed suit, though not always in an unequivocal manner. Its distinctive cults centred on a variety of deities with both Oriental and Classical nomenclature.[17] Most of the indigenous gods had their names transliterated in Greek, such as Yarhibol (Ἰαριβωλος), Aglibol (Ἀγλιβωλος) and Malakbel (Μαλαχ(ι)βηλος), while others were explicitly identified with Greek ones in the bilingual inscriptions, such as Arsu with Ares, Allat with Athena and Baal-Shamin with Zeus. Nemesis is an exceptional case, in that her Greek name appeared in Semitic transliteration as *nmsys*, a practice comparable to the transliteration of Greek divine names into Syriac in the above-mentioned *Oration of Melito the Philosopher*.[18] The conglomeration of religious layers, with clear links to various cultural spheres of influence, is perhaps best visible in Palmyra's religious topography, with the temples of the indigenous and Mesopotamian gods Bel and Nebu in the heart of the old city, and those of the relative 'newcomers' Allat and Baal-Shamin situated towards the north-west, in the area which before the creation of the central colonnade had been the city's outskirts. But even if it is undeniable that Palmyra maintained many aspects of its dominant indigenous religious culture—not only as far as divine names and some festival celebrations are concerned, but also regarding the mud-brick predecessors which were often preserved (in spirit or even in stone) behind the Classical façades of the temples from the Roman period—the city also conformed to a number of customary frameworks of religious culture typical for the Greek or Graeco-Roman

[15] Millar (1993), p.470.

[16] On bilingualism in the inscriptions, see Yon (2002), p.23-36; Kaizer (2002a), p.27-34; Taylor (2002), p.317-24; Gzella (2005). For bilingually countermarked coins, see Kaizer (2007), p.57-9, and for the hypothesis that even one Palmyrene issue itself had a bilingual legend, see ibid. p.52-3.

[17] Cf. Gawlikowski (1990) and (1991).

[18] Kaizer (2001), p.215.

city in the Eastern Roman empire in general.[19] One can think of the connection between public cults and the territorial division of the *polis* (new 'civic' tribes were introduced into Palmyra alongside the existing indigenous clans and family groups when the city firmly became a part of *provincia* Syria); the sensitivity to developments elsewhere in the empire concerning the use of divine epithets; and the symbolic language used in the monumental inscriptions honouring local and other benefactors (despite the fact that euergetic inscriptions from Palmyra were often uniquely bilingual and contained—seen from a Classical perspective—outlandish elements such as exotic divine names). In addition, as I argue in my own contribution to this volume, it has often been overlooked that the variety of sacrificial modes by means of which the relationship between the Palmyrene worshippers and their divine world could find expression corresponded substantially with the sacrificial systems in place in the Graeco-Roman world at large (regardless of the obvious fact that there was serious indigenous influence too, as especially the Aramaic terminology makes clear). As regards the villages in the steppe northwest to the city, the so-called Palmyrène, the pole position amongst the divine is occupied by a different branch of deities than is the case in Palmyra itself: on reliefs they are depicted mostly armed, and often on horse- or camelback.[20] The material found in the hinterland is different enough not to milk it for information about the religious life of the oasis city, but neither are the villages completely deprived of Greek influences. For example, a fragmentary relief of a typical rider-god with the remains of a Greek inscription (Κασ]τωρ) identifies the deity as one of the Dioscuri, while another one seems to associate two typically Palmyrene gods with the Classical goddess Nemesis.[21]

A large Palmyrene community was also based at Dura-Europos, the fortress town on the Euphrates. Partly merchants and partly soldiers, the Palmyrenes at Dura on the one hand stuck rigorously to their ancestral gods, while, on the other, got involved in both Greek

[19] Kaizer (2004a), passim.

[20] See the wonderfully evocative archaeological report by Schlumberger (1951).

[21] Dioscuri: ibid., p.56, n°17 (pl.XXI.4). Nemesis: ibid., p.76, n°1 (pl.XXXVI.1), with Kaizer (2001) for the interpretation.

and Roman cults.[22] The *Feriale Duranum*, a calendar preserved on papyrus and found with the archives of the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, is generally believed to imply that Palmyrene conscripts to the imperial army adhered to typically Roman cults and celebrated typically Roman festivals and imperial birthdays.[23] They certainly joined in the worship of some gods who were extremely popular amongst soldiers, above all the cult of Mithras, and they also paid their respect to the civic deities of the town where they now lived, such as Zeus Megistos. Palmyrene inscriptions and sculptures were found in the latter's temple,[24] and both on reliefs and on a fresco Palmyrenes are depicted in an act of sacrifice before the divine city protector of Dura alongside that of their hometown.[25] Obviously there were some very strong similarities between Dura-Europos and Palmyra, due in no small part to the presence in Dura of so many Palmyrenes. But it is noteworthy that, whereas the divine world of the metropolis in the Syrian steppe was ruled first and foremost by indigenous gods, the small town situated further to the east had, as an originally Macedonian colony, preserved a substantial layer of Greek religion at its core.[26]

Similar discrepancies can be seen too in Mesopotamia proper. Always in the shadow of their great Assyrian past, Assur, Nineveh and Nisibis were still thriving in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. As is shown by Peter Haider in this volume, the religious cultures of these three towns situated in each other's vicinity developed in surprisingly different directions in post-Assyrian times, with Nineveh and Nisibis exposed to Hellenistic and other 'foreign' influ-

[22] The standard work is Dirven (1999). Cf. Luther (2004).

[23] Note, however, that the recent study by Reeves (2004) moves away from the established 'military' interpretation of the *Feriale Duranum* and chooses to understand it as a civic calendar instead, introduced into Dura when it became a Roman *colonia*. Reeves' argument should, if correct, have far-reaching implications for the study of Roman military religion in general.

[24] E.g. a relief of Arsu with accompanying Palmyrenean inscription, see Downey (1977), nº42 with *PAT* 1113, and a relief in Palmyrene style of a man leading a camel, see Downey (1977), nº44.

[25] For the reliefs, dated to AD 159 and found in the temple 'of the Gadde', see *Rep.* VII/VIII, pl.XXXIII-XXXIV, with *PAT* 1094-8. For the fresco, from the 230s and found in the temple 'of the Palmyrene gods', see Cumont (1926), p.89-114 with pl.XLIX-LI.

[26] The only comprehensive account is still Welles (1969). Cf. Kaizer (forthcoming 1 + 2).

ences, while the pantheon of Assur remained characterised by indigenous gods known through inscriptions written in an East Mesopotamian dialect of Aramaic. Only 50 km to the west of Assur Hatra, a city that used a similar, nearly identical Aramaic dialect, suddenly burst on the stage at around the same time, but despite the similarity in language and their close proximity to each other the two had only a few deities in common. The divine world of Hatra was dominated by what may have been the only undisputed family triad in the Near East in the Roman period, that of Maren (Our Lord), Marten (Our Lady), and Bar-Maren (the Son of Our Lord), occupying the most important temples in the large rectangular temple complex in the centre of the circular town.[27] From the city gates come some intriguing inscriptions which record legal statements on capital punishment, differentiating not only between thefts inside and outside the city's boundaries, but also between thieves from Hatra itself and from elsewhere. Following the counsel of an anonymous deity, Hatra's decision makers state 'that anyone who will steal within this ramp and within the exterior wall, if it concerns a man from inside he will be killed by the death of the god, if it concerns a man from outside he will be stoned' (H336 and H343). Many questions as to the precise interpretation of the formula must remain unanswered, but these and other texts suggest that the city as a whole was considered 'sacred'. Indeed, on its coins Hatra presented itself as 'Hatra (i.e. the sacred enclosure) of the Sun god, Shamash'.[28]

Finally Edessa, the capital of the kingdom of Osrhoene in northern Mesopotamia (whose indigenous name is preserved in its present name Urfa), is a case on its own above all by virtue of its early Christian history, which made it—at least in legend—the first Christian kingdom in the world, and the centre of Eastern Syrian Christianity, with the development of a new liturgical language, Classical Syriac, the best attested member of the Aramaic family. As regards Edessa's pagan divine world, intriguingly (though of course in a simplified manner) illuminated by some Christian martyr acts, there is some obvious overlap in deities with places elsewhere in the Near East, such as Bel, Nebu, and Atargatis.[29] But, again, there is unique

[27] For an overview, see Kaizer (2000b), with Bertolino (2004).
[28] For a study of these legal texts, see Kaizer (2006b).
[29] Drijvers (1980); Ross (2001), p.83-116. Cf. Tubach, Rammelt and Greisiger (forthcoming). On the martyr acts, see now Greisiger (2005).

and specifically local evidence to make the city and its gods stand out on their own terms: in addition to the long known indigenous mosaics with their Syriac inscriptions,[30] identifying families of Edessan notables wearing Parthian trousers and other non-Classical dress and headgear, there is now also a mosaic discovered in Edessa, with accompanying Syriac inscriptions, showing how mankind is being created by Prometheus (*prmtws*), carefully watched by a series of gods all depicted in Greek fashion and led by *mrlh'* ('the lord of the gods'),[31] a divine name which is applied to various supreme deities in northern Mesopotamia, such as Sin at Harran.[32]

Geographical Divisions

Possibly the most immediate observation resulting from this (far from comprehensive) bird's-eye view of local religious life in the late Hellenistic and Roman Near East, is the way in which geographical divisions have come to define the subject. The various localities and temple complexes were all embedded in regions with quite specific geological characteristics, which had a bearing on their relevant cultural and historical developments. As a whole, the lands of the Near East have always been seen as "un pays de transit",[33] but the enormous landmass beyond the Taurus mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, intersected by the Orontes, Euphrates, Tigris, and many other rivers, was also "eine Zone naturräumlicher Vielfalt, die durch allmähliche Übergänge und kleinräumiges Wechselspiel gekennzeichnet ist:"[34] Northwest Syria, the heartland of the first Near Eastern province when founded by Pompey in the 60s BC, with its hinterland known as the Limestone Massif; the Orontes valley running parallel with the Ansariyeh mountains, including its most famous top Mt Kasios; the Phoenician coast with the Beqa'a valley between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains, continuing into the Palestinian coast and, across the Golan, the various regions of Roman

[30] Drijvers and Healey (1999) list nearly thirty mosaic inscriptions. Most recently, see Healey (2006), publishing a Syriac inscription on an Orpheus mosaic.

[31] Balty and Briquel Chatonnet (2000); Bowersock (2001). Cf. Bowersock (2006), p.36-8.

[32] On Harran, see Green (1992).

[33] Rostovtzeff (1935c), p.3.

[34] Sommer (2005), p.33.

Judaea: the Galilee, Samaria and Idumaea; Transjordan, the area of the Decapolis cities, with deserts stretching south- and eastwards; the city-size villages of the Jebel Hauran in southern Syria, bordering on the basalt fields where thousands of so-called Safaitic and other inscriptions were cut on the rocks; the large Syrian steppe between Damascus and Dura-Europos on the Middle Euphrates, with the oasis of Palmyra more in the centre of its own hinterland, dotted with villages to the northwest, than in true splendid isolation; Mesopotamia proper, from Mesene and other areas in the Gulf region via Seleucia on the Tigris and Ctesiphon to the cities in the north, Hatra and Assur, Arbela, Nisibis and Nineveh; the mountainous kingdom of Commagene to the west of the Upper-middle Euphrates, centred upon the important crossing of Zeugma, 'the bridge', and the hills and steppe of Osrhoene east of the river.

Historiography of the Religious History of the Near East

Due in no small part to the relative dearth in Classical literary sources which deal with the Levant, scholarship of the Hellenistic and Roman Near East has traditionally been the playground of archaeologists.[35] The often romanticised explorations by individual travellers such as Gertrude Bell and Ulrich Jasper Seetzen,[36] to mention only two of the better known names, were followed by large archaeological missions at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, whose large folio publications still serve as the foundation for research in the modern era. From the start, and rather unsurprisingly, most attention was paid to the enormous temple complexes that dominated the large cult centres in the region. Each of the national 'schools' of approach within Near Eastern scholarship has its roots in those long-standing archaeological campaigns.

The study of the Near East in Germany stands forever in the footsteps of giants such as Walter Andrae (1875-1956), Otto Puchstein

[35] It is worth noting that the important overviews of the region by Strabo (*Geogr.* XVI) and Pliny the Elder (*HN* V.xii.65-xxi.90, with VI.xxviii.107-xxxiii.162 on Mesopotamia and Arabia) have never been the subject of a comparative historical and geographical commentary.

[36] Bell (1985), with Sommer (2004b); Seetzen (2002).

(1856-1911) and the ubiquitous Theodor Wiegand (1864-1936).[37] It was a visit to the ruins of Baalbek in 1898 by Kaiser Wilhelm (II) that instigated the first excavations of the massive temple complex of ancient Heliopolis, led by Puchstein between 1898 and 1905, and published after the latter's premature death by Wiegand.[38] Of the campaigns in the region led by Wiegand himself, his pioneering work at Palmyra (in 1902 and 1917) still counts as the cornerstone on which all later archaeological explorations of the site build.[39] But the most remarkable exploration of a Near Eastern site by Germans in the early-20th century must be that of the Parthian stronghold Hatra, which was for the first time mapped out and investigated in only seven very brief visits by members of the team responsible for the excavations in nearby Assur. The results of Andrae's "Feldarchäologie im Schnelldurchlauf"[40], which took place here between 1907 and 1911, were made available to the wider academic community without delay.[41] As regards their modern compatriots, the leading role is played by the Baghdad and Damascus branches of the Orient Department of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, both of which publish a journal and a monograph series,[42] but there are other organisations to, such as the German Protestant Institute for Archaeology of the Holy Land, based in Amman. The most recent synthesis of the interplay of religious cultures in the region is by Michael Sommer, who deals with Palmyra, Edessa, Dura-Europos and Hatra, and their respective territories, in a stimulating discussion of what he calls "Roms orientalische Steppengrenze", arguing that this zone acquired its peculiar identity as a result of multiple processes of acculturation which involved "die kreative Aneignung fremder Zeichen und ihr 'Überspringen' kultureller Grenzen".[43]

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[37] For a fascinating overview of the activities of the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* (*DOG*) since its foundation in 1898, see Wilhelm (1998).

[38] Wiegand (1921-25). For a recent overview of the archaeological situation, see Van Ess and Weber (1999).

[39] Wiegand (1932).

[40] Following the title of J. Marzahn's contribution on Hatra in Wilhelm (1998), at p.68.

[41] Andrae (1908-12).

[42] The *Baghdader Mitteilungen* (since 1960) and the *Baghdader Forschungen* (since 1979), and the *Damaszener Mitteilungen* (since 1983) and the *Damaszener Forschungen* (since 1989) respectively.

[43] Sommer (2005), with the quotation from p.404.

In the Anglo-Saxon world exploration of the Levant took off with three legendary missions from a Princeton team led by Howard Crosby Butler between 1899 and 1909, resulting in two series of monumental publications.[44] Gerasa became the best known of the Decapolis cities thanks to collaborations of Yale University with the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem in the late 1920s and with the American Schools of Oriental Research in the first half of the 1930s, resulting in an important book edited by Carl Kraeling.[45] As we will see below, Yale's contribution to the mission at Dura-Europos around the same time is arguably even more significant. In more recent years, leading historians in America and Britain have made some of the most important contributions to the study of the history and cultures of the Classical Levant, notably Glen Bowersock's work on Roman Arabia,[46] the classic by Benjamin Isaac[47] on the Eastern frontier zone, which provoked many reactions;[48] and above all Fergus Millar's major book from 1993, which is now the starting point for any exploration of the religious identities of the various regions of the Near East in the Roman period.[49]

Following in the footsteps of Ernest Renan (1823-1892), it is French scholarship that has long dominated Near Eastern studies, especially since the years of the French mandate, when Louvre conservator and epigrapher René Dussaud was the leading scholar of the religious history of the Near East. Since the middle of the last century the key role has been played by the Institut français du Proche-Orient (IFPO), founded in 1946 by Henry Seyrig as the Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth, and from 1977 until 2002 known as the Institut français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient (IFAPO). Seyrig excavated among other places the great temple of Bel at Palmyra (see below), and his publications and discussions of a wide range of

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[44] *Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899-1900* I-IV (New York, 1903-14) [*PAAES*], and *Syria: Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1904-1905 and 1909* I-IV (Leiden, 1914-49) [*PUAES*].

[45] Kraeling (1938).

[46] Bowersock (1983), and for his collected essays on the Levant, see id. (1994).

[47] Isaac is counted here amongst his Anglo-Saxon colleagues for convenience's sake. He is, in fact, a Swiss-born Israeli educated in The Netherlands.

[48] Isaac (1992), and for his collected essays on the subject, see id. (1998). For responses to the questions first asked by Isaac, see especially the articles in Kennedy (1996).

[49] Millar (1993). His papers on the near East are now brought together in id. (2006).

objects and monuments set the agenda for research into the religious life of the Hellenistic and Roman Near East for over a generation.[50] Of his successors Ernest Will may be named,[51] and also Jean-Marie Dentzer for his major work on the Hauran. The main French proponent of the Classical Levant in recent years is Maurice Sartre, author of the sole monograph dealing with both the Hellenistic and the Roman Near East.[52] Sartre is also one of the driving forces behind the rejuvenated *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (*IGLS*), originally set up at the beginning of the twentieth century to replace Waddington's corpus from 1870.[53]

Pride of place amongst the manifold archaeological enterprises which over the years have opened up the lands of the Near East to both academic and wider audiences must go to the legendary mission at Dura-Europos running from 1928 until 1937, jointly organised by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-lettres under the scientific directorship of the giants Michael Rostovtzeff and Franz Cumont.[54] Their involvement in the exploration of the remains of Dura's history and culture—which has been described as "fundamentally a matter of conception and interpretation"[55]—deserves praise only, but it also led to interpretations of the religious culture of Dura that have often been taken for granted by successive generations of scholars and students, and that stand in need of rethinking.[56] The growing internationalization of Near East-

[50] His numerous articles on 'Syrian antiquities', first published in the journal *Syria*, were collected in six volumes, Seyrig (1931-1965), with his numismatic papers put together in id. (1986) and what was left as id. (1985).

[51] For his collected papers, see Will (1995).

[52] Sartre (2001). Id. (2005) is an English translation of the second, Roman part of the French original only.

[53] http://www.hisoma.mom.fr/Programme_epigraphie/JB_YON/IGLS_intro.html. Cf. Waddington (1870).

[54] The latter had also conducted two very short campaigns at Dura in 1922 and 1923, which resulted in the classic volume Cumont (1926). The story of the excavations by the joint mission is told in brilliant detail by Clark Hopkins, who acted as assistant field director and then field director in seven of the ten seasons, in the posthumously published Hopkins (1979). The preliminary reports are *Rep.* I-IX (1929-52), with the tenth season remaining unpublished—but see Matheson (1992). Only a number of the *Final Reports* that were originally scheduled ever saw the light. Since the early 1980s a French-Syrian mission headed by Pierre Leriche has renewed exploration at the site, with special attention to re-analysis of earlier finds and to questions of chronology.

[55] Millar (1998b), p.474.

[56] Cf. Kaizer (forthcoming 1).

ern archaeology is perhaps best shown at Palmyra and in the cities of the Decapolis. Following the above-mentioned German work and that by Seyrig (especially in the temple of Bel[57]) under the French Mandate, the various sanctuaries and other monuments at Palmyra have been excavated by teams from different countries, including Switzerland (the temple of Baal-Shamin), Austria (the so-called Hellenistic town), Japan (in the Southeast necropolis) and Syria itself (e.g. the temple of Nebu), but above all by the Polish mission which has dominated Palmyrene scholarship since 1959, under the supervision first of Kazimierz Michałowski and from 1973 of Michał Gawlikowski.[58] As regards the Decapolis, individual cities are explored by teams not only from Israel (at Hippos-Susita and Nysa-Scythopolis) and Jordan, but also from the US (missions from St. Louis at Abila and Wooster, Ohio at Pella), Germany (at Gadara, with Dutch collaboration), France and Italy (at Gerasa).[59]

The continuing excavations of Near Eastern sites from the Hellenistic and Roman periods and their findings all have a bearing on what is doubtless the most fascinating debate concerning the region: ought one to interpret the evidence from the imperial period as a direct and conscious continuation of the cultural developments in preceding times, or is it right to acknowledge an unawareness on the part of the Near Eastern population in general of their own history? The above-mentioned works by the leading historians Fergus Millar and Maurice Sartre are the main representatives of the two opposite sides of this argument, with Millar's emphasis throughout *The Roman Near East* on what he describes as a historical "amnesia", and Sartre's focus on "la longue durée".[60] Both protagonists seem to have their own followers, but even if more material evidence from the pre-Roman period has now come to our knowledge,[61] it can-

[57] Seyrig, Amy and Will (1968-75).

[58] For all references, see Kaizer (2002a), p.20-4, and the entries on the individual temples.

[59] Cf. Hoffmann and Kerner (2002).

[60] Millar (1993), p.6, p.275, p.470 and p.494; Sartre (2001), p.14. Obviously, the fact that the abbreviated English translation of this book, Sartre (2005), in contrast to the French original only deals with the Roman period, rather than starting with Alexander, damages his addressing of the notion of continuity, ibid., p.2-3.

[61] Cf. the collection of articles on Hellenistic Syria, put together by Sartre, and published as *Topoi*, Suppl. 4 (2003). In contrast, see the classic paper by Millar (1987), to which the supplement to *Topoi*, perhaps surprisingly, only seldom refers.

not be denied that the absolute majority of sources from the Roman period refers to aspects of culture that came to the fore only after Pompey's legions had first set foot in the Near Eastern lands. The growing controversy is, in any case, far from being solved.

From 'Oriental Cults' to 'Near Eastern Religion'

It has hopefully become clear that a 'Near Eastern religion' as such is hard to distinguish. It does therefore not come as a surprise that a monograph dealing comprehensively with 'the religion(s)' of Syria and surrounding countries in the period from Alexander to Constantine has thus far not been written. However, when searching for a common denominator amongst the Oriental forms of 'paganism', scholars can be easily enticed by broad patterns of resemblance to categorize those elements which are known only from a specific local context as generally 'Near Eastern': elements such as divine names, cult epithets, and recurring sacrifices and rituals.[62] But it is the fact that one is dealing with a world in which a number of languages other than Latin or Greek played a significant role that has done most to promote and warrant the common pursuit of shared patterns of 'Oriental' worship—"given the fundamental importance of language to the emergence of nationalism in the modern world".[63] It remains ultimately unclear to what degree the different Aramaic dialects in use in the region in the late Hellenistic and Roman period were able to provide proper ties between the major cult centres, or whether the new *lingua franca* that was Greek performed that task.[64] If the *written* evidence from the Near East, in the form of inscriptions, is mostly in Greek, it is generally taken for granted that the large majority of the region's inhabitants spoke a Semitic language—whether it be one of the Aramaic dialects (ranging from Nabataean, Palmyrenean and Hatrean to the earliest forms of appearance of

[62] On the methodological difficulties to integrate the various local and universal aspects of Near Eastern religion in the Classical period, see Kaizer (2006a), which discusses at greater length some of the aspects which are only touched on here.

[63] Thus Millar (1993), p.11.

[64] Bowersock (1990), p.15-6, stated that "the Aramaic of Hatra or Edessa or Palmyra or Petra was by no means the same and never provided a common link for the cults of the great pagan centres, to name only a few of them. Once again it was Greek that met that need, and it did so across a broad front."

Classical Syriac), Hebrew, or a proto-Arabic language such as the so-called Safaitic—and a detailed investigation of the phraseology for religious practices in the various Semitic languages and dialects, which could establish to what degree any relevant terminology was shared between the various local and regional religious communities of the Near East, must count as a most pressing desideratum in the field of religious history of the Levant. These linguistic issues are obviously of the utmost relevance for the above-mentioned controversy surrounding (dis)continuity, origins and influence of and on the culture of the Roman Near East. As is well known, the Aramaic dialects from places such as Palmyra and Hatra are attested only in the Roman period (the oldest securely dated inscription in Palmyrenean is from 44 BC, in Hatrean from the second half of the first century AD), but it is clear that they developed from dialects which must have been in vogue already in the time of the dominant 'Reichsaramäische', the Aramaic of the Persian chancellery.[65] But whether that fact in itself—considering the absolute dearth of evidence for the dialects before the Roman period—was sufficient to have provided the Palmyrenes and Hatrenes with a deep consciousness and a critical awareness of their pre-Classical past is of course a different matter.[66] Similarly, the sudden appearance of Syriac as a cultural language east of the Euphrates and along the river itself in the first century AD (in contrast to northern Syria, where it only appeared in writing by the late Roman period) can only be made sense of if one assumes that it was already present in some form as a spoken

[65] See, most recently, the discussion by Gzella (2006). Unfortunately, Gzella is rather hostile to the idea of historians (such as myself) treading—with their 'predilection for sociological theory building'—on a field which he seems to consider the monopoly of Semitists. His is a rather old-fashioned case of academic compartmentalization in interdisciplinary times, and all the more dubious since he appears to have gained access to most of his information via these same historians.

[66] Contra ibid., p.26: "Zur Schriftsprache geworden, führte das Palmyrenisch-Aramäische also alte literarische Traditionen fort und bewahrte *schon allein dadurch* eine *selbstbewußte Erinnerung* an den nicht-griechischen Hintergrund von Syrien-Palästina in der hellenistischen und römischen Zeit" (my italics, TK). Cf. ibid., p.24: "die epigraphischen Gepflogenheiten des griechischen Inschriftenstils hatten nicht die Kraft, um ein rund tausendjähriges literarisches Erbe zu ersetzen—eine weitere Tatsache, die sich mit dem Glauben an eine Geschichtsvergessenheit in diesem Raum nur schwerlich vereinbaren läßt." Of course, Greek entered the Near East not solely in the shape of epigraphic formulations, but with its own rich literary heritage. Besides it has never been considered a matter of simple 'ersetzen'—this is presenting the discussion too much in black & white.

language earlier on, when Greek was still the dominant language for writing, documenting and corresponding. But a direct sense of continuity with a pre-Roman past is expressed in Syriac only in much later times, in the various chronicles produced in Edessa. On the other hand, it is highly relevant that by the fourth century, when the Syriac church was well established, the 'controversialist'[67] Ephraem shows himself highly dependent on Syriac terminology relating to the solar cult in his Christian hymns, as Jürgen Tubach shows in the final contribution to this volume.

In any case, scholars have been on the look-out for common religious features amongst the Semitic-speaking pagan inhabitants of the Near East since the famous nineteenth-century work by William Robertson Smith.[68] Highly influential in this context has been the Belgian scholar Franz Cumont, who as we have seen was one of the main forces behind the exploration of Dura-Europos. He introduced the notion of 'Oriental cults' as a major research tool for dealing with the worship of a broad range of 'foreign', non-Roman deities who had spread throughout the empire supposedly from beyond the Fertile Crescent and other non-Classical homelands such as Egypt, attracting their flock with the promise of an afterlife and with their sleeping monotheism paving the way for a triumphant Christendom.[69] Cumont was of course in the first place interested in the veneration of 'Oriental gods' in the Roman empire as a whole, and not in their worship 'at home', i.e. in the Near East. But his theories have nonetheless served to enhance the idea of an integral unity of the local cults of the Classical Levant, even if it is noteworthy that his most prominent case of an 'Oriental cult', that of Mithras, is virtually lacking from the local religions in the Levantine lands themselves.[70] Mention ought to be made here also of Elias Bickerman,

[67] Thus K. McVey in her entry in G. Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (eds.), *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Postclassical World* (Cambridge, Mass–London, 1999), p.427.

[68] Smith (1889).

[69] Cumont (1929). This classic has now been republished, with a new historiographical introduction, by Corinne Bonnet and Françoise van Haeperen (Torino: Nino Aragno Editore, 2006) as volume I of the *Scripta Maiora* in the *Bibliotheca Cumontiana*, a large project set up by the Academia Belgica and the Institut historique belge de Rome. For some recent studies in reaction to the Cumontian notion, see the collected essays in Bonnet, Rüpke and Scarpi (2006).

[70] As is well known, the mithraeum found at Dura in February 1934, prompting Cumont to travel to Dura for one final visit, could not confirm the Belgian scholar's theory of the cult's Oriental origins, since it was instead to be linked with

some of whose influential views on 'Near Eastern' religion in the late Hellenistic and Roman periods are scrutinised in the contribution to this volume by Milette Gaifman.

In 1961, in the footsteps of his mentor Cumont, the Dutch scholar Maarten Vermaseren provided a new vehicle to facilitate the spread of research into the religious life of the Hellenistic and Roman Near East with the founding of the Brill-series *Études préliminaires sur les religions orientales dans l'empire romain* (*ÉPRO*), which in 1992 was transformed into the present series of which this volume forms a part. A large variety of monographs on individual cults and on the religious life of individual cities and regions has since been published. The Cumontian model was still strictly adhered to by Robert Turcan in his work on Oriental cults from 1989.[71] Of the few academic attempts to deal with religious aspects of the late Hellenistic and Roman Near East as a whole, mention ought to be made of the study by the epigrapher Javier Teixidor of what he described as 'popular religion' in the region (which "must have remained practically unchanged in Greco-Roman times, for the inscriptions do not reflect the impact of new fashions"[72]), and by the theologian Andreas Feldtkeller of the "religiös plurale Kultur" of Roman Syria (applying sociological models to the sources, which is interesting, but also taking the evidence too much for granted[73]).

The first attempt at a systematic synthesis of the various local patterns of worship in the late Hellenistic and imperial Levant in book form was a short monograph published in 1941 by Otto Eissfeldt, the great Orientalist at Halle-Wittenberg. His *Tempel und Kulte* was based on a study of four sites which had in previous years been

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the arrival of soldiers coming to Dura from the Roman empire. Two other mithraea in the Near East, at Doliche and Hawarti, which were both discovered in 1997, still await final publication, but *may* be connected with more indigenous forms of worship. A cave situated underneath ancient Doliche, apparently containing two cult spaces for Mithraic rituals, seems to have been in use by the first century BC. Cf. Schütte-Maischatz and Winter (2001). The mithraeum at Hawarti has revealed some splendid wall paintings, depicting otherwise unknown scenes from mithraic mythology. Cf. M. Gawlikowski (2001). A recent issue of *Topoi*, 11.1 (2001), p.35-281, also discusses some other possible mithraea in the Near East.

[71] Turcan (1989). Interestingly, the term 'Oriental' was left out of the title of the English translation which is id. (1996).

[72] Teixidor (1977), with the quotation from p.6. For criticism, see Kaizer (2006a), p.30.

[73] Feldtkeller (1994).

opened to the wider academic community, namely Gerasa, Baalbek, Palmyra and Dura-Europos. The thesis that Eissfeldt put forward became very influential (though not all scholars who have taken up the thesis actually quote Eissfeldt), and has since dominated the field: the assumption that nearly all Near Eastern sites were founded, or at least re-founded, in the Hellenistic period, that they underwent influence not only from the Graeco-Roman (and in some cases also from the Parthian and later Persian) world, but also from the surrounding 'Arab' populations,[74] but that, ultimately, and most importantly, their local religious cultures remained at heart indigenous.[75] This indigenous nature of Near Eastern religion was visible—as is often argued—even in the Graeco-Roman appearance of the temples: the separation of the inner most sanctuary, the adyton (θάλαμος in Lucian's terminology[76]), from the cella, the temple building proper, has been said to reflect "la chapelle primitive qui était la demeure de la divinité".[77] It has led many scholars to make statements, in Eissfeldt's spirit, about the 'unchanged nature' of the Levantine deities in the Roman period, supposedly remaining untouched by *interpretatio graeca* (or *interpretatio romana*, for that matter[78]) underneath a superficial veneer which may at first glance have

[74] See now the important article by Macdonald (2003), who—in the process of pointing out the flaws in the arguments put forward by René Dussaud in two of his famous works—shows convincingly not only that 'Arab' (with one mysterious exception) was never used as a way to designate oneself before the century preceding the rise of Islam, but also that the term was applied to those having very different, sometimes even contradictory, ways of life. Cf. ibid., p.312: "the whole idea of a 'pénétration des Arabes en Syrie' is founded on a stereotypical view of Arabs as being by definition nomads combined with the anachronistic and circular reasoning that early 'Arabs' must have come from (what was only later called) 'the Arabian Peninsula'." For an example of persisting stubbornness, see Gzella (2006), e.g. p.16 n.4, p.20.

[75] Eissfeldt (1941), p.9: "In hellenistischer Zeit gegründet oder neu gegründet, haben Gerasa, Ba'albek, Palmyra und Dura zu den alten und zäh festgehaltenen angestammten Kulten ihres amoritisch-aramäischen Bodens Beeinflussungen nicht nur durch die Religionen ihrer griechischen und römischen und—wenigstens gilt das von Dura—iranisch-parthischen Oberherren erfahren, sondern auch durch die der umwohnenden arabischen Stämme, die mit ihnen in regem Austausch standen." And in his concluding remarks, at p.153, Eissfeldt states that, despite the influences these cities underwent, "ihre Religion im Kern doch heimisch-syrisch geblieben ist."

[76] *DDS* 31, with Lightfoot (2003), p.428-31.

[77] Gawlikowski (1991), p.255.

[78] Cf. Colledge (1986).

suggested otherwise.[79] Inevitably then, the religious history of the Hellenistic and Roman Near East has invariably been analysed in terms of an intersection between 'indigenous' and 'foreign' (mostly Classical) aspects; between 'local' elements and those coming from, or at least ascribed to, different cultural spheres of influence. As it stands, nearly all the papers in this volume deal with this problem of opposition, be it of indigenous vs Classical, or of Samaritan vs pagan, though in different manners and with different outcomes. As will be clear throughout this volume, there are many ways to approach such problems, but one way is to appreciate that the multifarious 'building-blocks' of a 'local religion' that were themselves not 'local', at least not in origin, *could* over time become considered as an intrinsic part of that same local religion, and could subsequently have lost any foreign association to which they may have been subject in an earlier phase.[80]

Variety of and Varieties in Local Forms of Religious Life

Despite the obvious similarities between the religious cultures of certain Near Eastern places and areas, their ruins, documents and other sources are also the result of a diversity which is not always understood or even recognized. Basically, there are two different sorts of variety in this context. The obvious, undeniable variety is that which distinguishes elements of religious culture coming from different, often opposite, spheres of influence from each other. Thus Zeus, Apollo and Athena are Greek names, the origins of Melqart and of Baal-Shamin lie in the Phoenician world,[81] the iwan-shaped temples at Hatra (and possibly Assur) are found only within the Parthian realm,[82] and festival celebrations in early Nisan (April) go back to

[79] E.g. Sartre (2001), p.926; id. (2005), p.318. Cf. Eissfeldt (1941), p.154: "In noch höherem Grade als von den Tempeln gilt es von den in ihnen verehrten Gottheiten, daß sie im Kern syrisch geblieben sind, obwohl sie weithin mit griechischen und römischen Namen benannt und nach Art der griechisch-römischen Göttertypen dargestellt werden." In Kaizer (2000a), I have argued that alongside the so-called 'superficial' Greek and Graeco-Roman iconography and other outward appearances which were introduced into the region, a whole new set of religious *notions* from the Classical world entered the religious world of the Near East too.

[80] As I argued in more detail in Kaizer (2000a).

[81] Cf. Bonnet (1988); Niehr (2003).

[82] Downey (1988).

the Mesopotamian world.[83] In addition, there are certain patterns of worship and peculiarities within media that are unique to one place only: dedicatory inscriptions from Palmyra are often bilingual, and the pantheon of Hatra was headed by a uniquely recognizable family-style triad. But there is also a more subtle variety which needs to be taken into account, a variety which is, as it were, 'organised' *within* a particular religious system. Within the Decapolis, whose cities are generally characterised by coinage which presents a Graeco-Roman façade of civic gods, individual cities put forward *different* deities as their main protagonists in an otherwise identical civic 'religious game', thus as variations amongst places with a similar cultural viewpoint.[84] Zeus is popular throughout the Decapolis, and so is the coronated Tyche figure.[85] But Artemis appears only on the coins of Gerasa (which is the subject of Achim Lichtenberger's article in this volume), and the civic issues of Nysa-Scythopolis are dominated by instances of Dionysus' mythology: Scythopolis was also known as Nysa after the nymph who was nurse of the baby Dionysus, and the god was depicted on coins from the city from the early Roman period onwards; a new visual programme centred upon him, however, came to dominate Nysa's civic issues only in the second half of the second century: only then, the mythological world of Dionysus became directly connected with the local foundation legends, e.g. the god's birth out of Zeus' thigh before he is handed over to the nymph, and baby Dionysus seated on Nysa's lap.[86] In contrast to this 'subtle' variety, a real diversification within the coinage of the Decapolis cities as a whole is provided by that of Adra'a. As we have seen above, this city, whose territory bordered immediately on that of the other Decapolis cities Kapitolias, Abila and Dion, put an aniconic image, a so-called betyl (see below), on its coinage, with an accompanying legend saying 'Dusares, god of the citizens of Adra'a' (Δουσάρης θεὸς Ἀδραηνῶν).[87] Dusares, the leading god of the divine world of the Nabataeans[88] (an originally nomadic people centred

[83] For many more examples, though sometimes over-emphasised, see Dalley (1998).
[84] Cf. C. Howgego in the introduction to Howgego, Heuchert and Burnett (2005), p.17.
[85] In general, see Spijkerman (1978), with Lichtenberger (2003).
[86] Barkay (2003).
[87] Spijkerman (1978), p.60-1, n^{os}1-3.
[88] The starting point for all future research is now Healey (2001).

in Petra) is, with his name transcribed in Greek, characterised on the city's civic issues as the god par excellence of its citizens; simultaneously he is associated with a (from a Greek perspective) very strange aniconic cult object, which was totally uncommon on what generally counts as Roman provincial coinage. This is not to say (as is clear also from Milette Gaifman's paper in this volume) that patterns of worship in Adra'a were more primitive or that there was an absence of anthropomorphic gods in the city's divine world; but it does mean that a deliberate choice was made by the city's representatives to relate a non-Classical object to its civic religious façade.

The second case of 'subtle varieties' within a unified context is the labeling of gods after individual localities, hence creating toponymic deities, turning gods who underwent common worship into specifically local ones. The examples are plentiful. Not only do they include the empire-wide attested cults of the above-mentioned IOMH and IOMD, gods who according to their names originated at Baalbek-Heliopolis and at Doliche, but whose absorption of the epithets of Jupiter Capitolinus emphasised their claim to a greatness extending far beyond the realms of the respective hometowns. The majority of such deities concern otherwise unknown versions of the divine name (e.g. Ζεὺς Βαιτοκαικη in his theocratically ruled village in the Jebel Ansariyeh,[89] or Ζεὺς Δαμασκηνός at Damascus), and sometimes provides the modern onlooker with the sole key to an unknown locality's name (e.g. the dedication of the model of a ship to Θεὸς Ζεὺς Βαιθμαρη on the Hermon, or a dedication to Ζεὺς Οὐράνιος Ὕψιστος Σααρναιος Ἐπήκοος at a village north-east of Byblos).[90] The cults of these toponymic deities offer a unique window on the manner in which worshippers deliberately applied forms of cultural (and possibly even ethnic[91]) identification to their deities, and a detailed study of the evidence with regard to the various aspects of their worship—which at present remains a desideratum—would contribute further to a more complete understanding of the way in which

[89] Cf. Dignas (2002), p.74-84 and p.156-67, for a study of the epigraphic dossier concerning this cult.

[90] For examples see, respectively, *IGLS* III, n°4028; XIII.1, n°9013; VI, n°2989; Renan (1864-74), p.234-6, with Soyez (1977), p.87.

[91] What to make of the mention of Atargatis 'of the Arabs' in an inscription from Qalaat Faqra on Mt Lebanon? Cf. Rey Coquais (1999), p.634ff. On the difficulties with regard to interpreting the notion of 'Arab' and 'Arabs' in this period, see Macdonald (2003).

the societies to which these worshippers belonged were built up, worked, and conceived themselves.

By targetting different approaches to the multifarious aspects of worship of the late Hellenistic and Roman Near East, this volume does not aim solely to present a combined series of individual studies of the religious cultures of the Classical Levant. In addition to this, it is also hoped that, as a compilation of case-studies of the *variety* of local religious life in the region, it may serve to create and put forward certain models which can be applied to religious variety within larger boundaries elsewhere in the ancient world. The contributions to this volume originated in an attempt to draw attention to aspects of religious life in the Classical Levant that are linked to a particular locality or set of localities. They are meant precisely to bring out the *variety* between the different local and regional forms of worship in this part of the world. Of course, the present collection cannot claim to cover all the relevant areas and/or religious developments which have been sketched above. But it does nonetheless make a contribution to our quest for understanding the polytheistic cults of the Near East as a whole, above all because it can act as a stimulus to further interdisciplinary work in a way which goes beyond the sum of its parts. These papers were commissioned not just to throw light on the 'variety of local religious life' by focusing on different case-studies, but also to do so by approaching different source materials from different points of view. The authors come from different disciplines, and also represent different schools of thought (often, though not always, determined by nationality). All too often the study of religious evidence from the Near East takes place in contexts which are relatively closed, with scholars preaching for their own socio-linguistically arranged, or field-related, communities of colleagues. And this is a shame, not only since there is so much that archaeologists, art-historians, epigraphers, historians, numismatists, Semitists, theologians and others can learn from each other, but also as the different disciplines and schools of thought are actually *in need of* each other if the subject area is to progress further. Naturally, the different approaches by the authors to this volume make it unlikely that the reader will agree with the conclusions of all the individual papers. However, disagreeing with someone's conclusions does not mean that one cannot learn from methods and ways of thinking with which one may feel at first uncomfortable, and I have therefore made

no attempt to iron out instances where the authors are at odds with each other, or indeed where I disagree myself.

A Variety of Sources

Research into religious life in the Classical Levant seems handicapped by the nearly complete absence of sources which may hint at what the inhabitants of the region in the Hellenistic and Roman periods actually 'believed'. Evidence is mainly limited to the still rapidly expanding number of inscriptions, remains of buildings, and sculptures and other iconographic sources. Inscriptions usually provide the basis, since one must attend in the first place to the names and epithets actually given to deities by the worshippers. In other words, the god was "whatever his worshipper said he was", as Fergus Millar phrased it.[92] This is certainly right in the sense that most of our knowledge of the divine world depends on the inscribed altars and steles which individual dedicants set up to individual inhabitants of that world. The epigraphic material thus provides the remnants of a long-gone system of belief which cannot any longer be determined in its entirety, and we must therefore be continuously aware of the fact that the evidence at our disposal is only part of the picture. What is more, not only now, but also in Antiquity itself, the presentation of the divine in inscriptions (or, for that matter, in iconography and architecture) could evoke manifold responses on the part of the observer. That being said, ancient worshippers would no doubt disagree with the idea that they 'made up' their gods and goddesses: they merely addressed their deities in that manner which seemed to fit the appropriate situation best. In other words, the gods were supposed to be there perpetually and invariably, but worshippers could give them different names and approach them in different, sometimes contradictory, manners, depending on the circumstances and on their (i.e. the worshippers') own perspective. From that point of view, any attempt on our part to map cult patterns of particular deities is obscured from the start by our inability to read the mind of the worshipper.

[92] Millar (1993), p.270, on Zeus of Carmel/of Heliopolis. Cf. ibid., p.249, on Dolichenus: "his worshippers could literally make of him what they would."

As for the various architectural forms of sanctuaries, it remains unclear to what degree they were regulated by the needs of specific cults, let alone by systems of belief. But it seems clear that the appearance of a sanctuary, whether Greek or 'indigenous', or Mesopotamian or Parthian, could result from deliberate decisions on the part of the worshippers, as much as from adherence to traditional models. In particular it is the role of the benefactor, or group of benefactors, that—in consultation with the planning authority of the equivalent of a 'municipal board'—will have been most influential in determining the eventual outcome of the sacred building.[93] In any case, a town's 'religious topography', the way in which the different sanctuaries and places of worship related to each other, had obvious effects on the standing and role of the various cults within a community, and this differed substantially from one place to another. At Damascus and Hatra, a large rectangular temenos dominated the town plan, in the case of Damascus the temple of Zeus Damaskènos, in the case of Hatra a complex which contained a number of individual temples dedicated to different gods and goddesses. At the latter site also many minor shrines (fourteen of which have been excavated thus far) were located, outside the central temenos, but still within the city walls, that were differentiated from the temples within the temenos not only by being dedicated to different gods, but also by following different building plans and architecture: whereas the large iwans in the temenos are representatives of a temple type which surfaces in the Parthian period, the minor shrines are rooted in the Ancient Mesopotamian tradition of the *Breitraumtempel*. As regards Palmyra, we have already seen how the city's religious topography reveals how the heart of what was the 'old' city (usually dubbed 'Hellenistic Palmyra') was reserved for sanctuaries of deities who either counted as indigenous or had arrived in a much earlier period from Mesopotamia, while the gods and goddesses who were brought to the city in more recent times found a home on what had originally been the city's outskirts. In Gerasa of the Decapolis both Zeus and Artemis occupied a large sanctuary. That of Zeus goes back at least to the late Hellenistic period, and possibly even to a

[93] For some considerations on the benefactor's role, see Kaizer (2006c), a case-study of the temple of Bel at Palmyra, with additional attention to other sacred centres such as Baalbek.

pre-historic grotto, while that of Artemis was built only under Hadrian, according to recent excavations "*ex nihilo*".[94] With that new temple and the city's subsequent restructuring of other monumental buildings and their approach, the temple of Zeus became, in a purely geographical sense, a bit peripheral. But that is not to say that his temple ceased to perform an important function in the day to day religious life of the city, even if Gerasa's coinage (as we have seen, and as Achim Lichtenberger shows in detail) comes to be dominated by Artemis. As a final example, the religious topography of Dura-Europos, originally founded on the citadel hill and the area directly adjacent to it, was characterised from the end of the second century BC by a rigorously applied gridiron city plan, obviously with important consequences for the way in which religious space could be negotiated.

As for iconography, it is clear that deities could be, and were, represented in multiple and often ambiguous ways in sculptures, reliefs, frescoes and other media. Whereas the 'Greek' cities of north-western Syria and of the Decapolis revealed mostly traditionally Classical art, cities such as Palmyra, Hatra and Edessa were characterised by an art form usually referred to as 'Parthian art', a misnomer used (on the basis of resemblances in style) for reliefs and sculptures which were characterised above all by a consistent frontality.[95] The proceedings of a four-day international conference on 'the sculptural environment of the Roman Near East', held at Michigan in November 2004, are eagerly awaited.[96] Within the context of iconography, depictions of gods and religious symbols on coins seem to occupy a special position. One could argue that, from at least one perspective, the numismatic material is more significant than individual dedications, since coins mostly come from the city as a collectivity: the religious imagery on coins was supposedly recognized and worshipped by the entire population of the place where they were minted. Nevertheless, one ought to be aware that (as is most obvious for the Decapolis) the evidence for cults on a city's coinage does not provide

[94] Thus Seigne (1992), p.187.
[95] Drijvers (1990).
[96] To be published as *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East: Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power*. Proceedings of an International Conference at the University of Michigan and the Toledo Museum of Art, 7-10 November 2004 (Peeters, forthcoming).

us with a complete and impartial view of that city's worship, but rather presents a mere façade of civic religious life.

Literary sources on pagan worship in the Near East in the Classical period are of course very limited. Both earlier and later sources need to be taken into account, in the case of Ancient Babylonian literature to establish the nature of what there had been in the region before the Hellenistic and Roman periods (so that one can judge properly notions of influence)[97], and in the case of the Christian and Jewish sources (both contemporaneous and later) to learn how these misleadingly, and in any case in a simplified manner, presented pluralist polytheism. Of course, one literary text stands out, and it is no coincidence that most contributors refer to it in their own paper: *On the Syrian Goddess* (aka *De Dea Syria*, or *DDS*), attributed to the second-century satirist Lucian, and dealing with the temple of Atargatis at Hierapolis (Mabog) in northern Syria. This treatise is of particular importance as it is the only contemporary account of pagan worship in the Near East by someone who claims to be an insider. As such it provides what is potentially our best access to an indigenous cult in Roman Syria. Fortunately for us, and for all future scholarship, it is now supplied with a masterly treatment by Jane Lightfoot.[98] As she has established beyond reasonable doubt, *On the Syrian Goddess* is a complicated and nearly perfect imitation of the style of the work of Herodotus. Of course, this fact has a serious effect on the usefulness of the text for historical purposes, to the degree that one reviewer stated that "the fact is that whenever *DDS* is the only evidence for some religious practice in Hierapolis, its evidential value is nil."[99] However, if the Herodotean-modelled *On the Syrian Goddess* was not meant in the first place to provide accuracy with regard to cultic realities at the main temple of Hierapolis, its value as "a priceless source for the religious history of imperial Syria" is not automatically diminished.[100] One could argue rather the opposite. Even if the piece was meant as tongue-in-cheek (at which some fantastic exaggerations would hint, such as the reference in *DDS* 28 to columns at the entrance to the temple which were allegedly 600 feet high), the author would have needed to portray a real-

[97] Cf. Dalley (1998).
[98] Lightfoot (2003).
[99] North (2004), p.299.
[100] Lightfoot (2003), p.221; contra North (2004).

istic representation of religious life in Roman Syria to make the joke work. He must therefore have been familiar with some aspects of Near Eastern worship (which is what he claims in *DDS* 1, 'I myself that write am an Assyrian'). And this holds true whoever the author was, whether indeed Lucian, who in another work (*How to Write History* 24) claims to come from Samosata in Commagene, or whether an unknown, but equally skilled literator. Thus if the text does not give an accurate or true picture of what went on in a Levantine sanctuary, it is still emblematic of religious life in the Near Eastern lands.[101]

Religious Life in the Near East Viewed from Nine Different Angles

The individual contributions to this volume throw, from different angles, further light on this. Seven papers which are focused on a particular city or region are preceded by an investigation of a notion which is generally taken as close to the heart of Near Eastern religion, and followed by a brief study of the 'Nachleben' of some central pagan imagery and terminology in the life of Early Christianity. The volume opens with a radical and provocative re-examination by the art-historian and archaeologist Milette Gaifman of a term that has done most to define Near Eastern religion in the centuries between Alexander and Diocletian: the 'betyl' (βαίτυλος, most likely from the Semitic root *bt'l*, 'house of the deity'), an aniconic cult object in the shape of a stone, cone, stele or altar. The traditionally held view is that the population of the Roman Near East as a whole can be conveniently categorised as engaged in the worship of such aniconic imagery. In contrast, Gaifman argues that the binary model of aniconic vs anthropomorphic objects of worship does not cover cultic realities, even if this juxtaposition was already very much part of an opinionated dialogue in the Roman period itself.[102] On a variety of reliefs, sculptures and frescos, the gods and goddesses

[101] It has been argued in a stimulating piece by Elsner (2001) that despite, or rather precisely because of, the author's eschewing from disclosing his identity, *On the Syrian Goddess* is highly revealing, in deliberately confusing terms of 'us' against 'them', about common perceptions of what was 'Near Eastern'.

[102] Of much relevance to the debate will also be the contribution by P. Stewart, 'Baetyls as statues? Cult images in the Roman Near East' in the above-mentioned

inhabiting the divine worlds of the Near East found themselves represented in a miscellaneous blend, which allows one to trace the bare outline of the ongoing processes of assimilation, but only seldom to appreciate their full significance. Worshippers could opt to apply both indigenous and Classical imagery to the embodiment of their gods and, as we have seen above, there is a stubborn proneness amongst scholars to view the 'true nature' of the indigenous divine world as being ultimately unaffected by influences coming from the Hellenistic and Roman 'West', which are all too often brushed aside as being of 'decorative' value only. However, as has been argued by Glen Bowersock, the Greek culture of the Roman Near East ought not to be interpreted necessarily as the opposite of more 'indigenous' traditions, and once the Greek, or Graeco-Roman cultural elements had been transmitted to the Near East, they could serve there as a medium by which the various local cultures could express themselves in dynamic new fashion.[103]

The following two papers deal with religious aspects in rural areas, showing how linguistic and architectural elements from the Graeco-Roman world at large came to form part of religious life in the world of villages of the Roman Near East.[104] The historian and epigrapher Julien Aliquot focuses on the rural cults of Mt Hermon, in a piece written against the background of his work towards a volume of inscriptions from the Lebanon, Antilebanon and Mt Hermon for the above-mentioned *IGLS*. His work is particularly relevant since the mountains have always been in the shadow of the Phoenician coastal cities, and the starting point on the region is still the classic work on *Römische Tempel in Syrien* by Daniel Krencker and Willy Zschietzschmann, from 1938.[105] A complete history of religious patterns in the Phoenician lands—both urban and rural—in the Hellenistic and Roman periods could in any case not be written without proper attention to the epigraphic, sculptural and architectural evidence from the hinterland. The use in the imperial period of three differ-

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proceedings of a conference on *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East: Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power* (Peeters, forthcoming).

[103] Bowersock (1990), esp. p.7-9. At p.8-9: "Hellenism may have given the face to a god formerly worshipped as an idol, but its face was a local face."

[104] Contra the statement in Sartre (2005), p.291, that "Syria's rural areas offered virtually total resistance to Hellenization, apart from some superficial aspects that affected only the elites."

[105] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938).

ent eras to date inscriptions, shows that Mt Hermon was shared by Sidon, Damascus and Paneas, in the same way that the Jebel Barisha in the Limestone Massif in northern Syria was divided between Antioch and Chalcis. In the latter case, identical figures of a reclining Heracles at the start of two roads leading up to a hill top sanctuary at Srir seem to differ indeed only in their dating formula, which may provide a hint on how that particular sacred place was administrated.[106] As regards the network of shrines and temples on Mt Hermon, the situation can partly be compared to other arrangements in the Near East, but a sufficient number of problems and questions come up in Aliquot's study to merit an interpretation of the religious topography of Mt Hermon as determined by specific local conditions. As we have seen, the situation as regards the 'villages' in the Hauran seems very different, partly because the epigraphic evidence has revealed a uncommonly high degree of administrative independence on the part of the rural communities. In his paper, the archaeologist Arthur Segal approaches the basalt lands of southern Syria from a purely architectural angle. He divides the religious buildings in the Hauran into 'Vitruvian' and 'non-Vitruvian' sanctuaries, a development which stands in sharp contrast to what happened elsewhere in the Roman empire. Whether the latter category of temples should indeed be connected to the so-called imperial cult, as Segal postulates, must remain open to debate, but it is clear that from an architectural point of view some of the places of worship in the Hauran managed to develop truly independent manifestations of their local culture. Such "regional begrenzten Ausprägungen von großer Eigenständigkeit" must have been the direct result of an absence of political unification of the region, which had traditionally been divided between the kingdoms of the Nabataeans and of the Herodians.[107]

The next three papers focus, in some way or another, on religious patterns in some of the larger urban centres in the Roman Levant. West and south-west of the Hauran, and bordered to the south-east by desert, the cities of the Decapolis form some sort of 'virtual island' not only with a view towards their isolation from the surrounding

[106] For the evidence from Srir, see Callot and Marcillet-Jaubert (1984).

[107] Thus the introduction to Freyberger, Henning and von Hesberg (2003), p.3, and the articles by Kalos, Weber and Dentzer in that volume.

areas in environmental terms,[108] but also in terms of their self-presentation as 'Greek' cities.[109] What lay behind their public façade is probably less unequivocal to describe, and has indeed given rise to a number of generalities stating the opposite.[110] The paper by Achim Lichtenberger, trained in classical archaeology, ancient history and theology, is based on the coinage of Gerasa. The parallel second- and third-century 'Roman provincial coinage' of the Decapolis cities, it can be argued,[111] is what makes a study of Decapolis religion in general a valid undertaking, since it is precisely the numismatic evidence that contributes most to the notion of a cultural cohesion between cities which had long (in any case since AD 106, when they were split between three Roman provinces) lost any *real* linking. But one ought not to lose sight of the fact that it concerns a public frontage, nothing more and nothing less, but certainly not the standard against which to measure all other evidence. That said, it is fascinating to see how a detailed study of the coins of the best known Decapolis city reveals, underneath their Classical appearance, an absolute dichotomy between two religious currents active behind the scenes. Showing how the coin legends at Gerasa are linked to specific iconographic types, Lichtenberger argues that the rivalry between the two main deities of the city's divine world, Zeus and Artemis, which was implicitly reflected in the civic issues, can be traced back to the fact that one of them had indigenous roots, while the other had originally been the result of Seleucid 'religious policy'. Another Greek city is the subject of the paper by Jonathan Kirkpatrick, an ancient historian working on Judaism. Next to Mt Gerizim, on whose top the Samaritan temple had first been built as a rival to the Jewish Temple in the fourth century BC, Flavia Neapolis was founded with a typically Greek constitution in the aftermath of the Jewish war, quite literally a new city founded under the new Flavian

[108] Cf. Kennedy (2007), esp. p.52-5, borrowing a term from, and building on the methodology of, Horden and Purcell (2000), p.65ff.

[109] Esp. Millar (1993), p.408-14.

[110] Rostovtzeff (1932), p.85: "though, to outward view, the town (Gerasa, ed.) was Greek, its basis was Arab, and the same is true of its religion"; Graf (1986), p.792, referring to Nabataean influence in the Decapolis region as "extensive and considerable"; Ball (2000), p.17: "the architecture is oriental, the temples and the cults were to local Semitic deities."

[111] Cf. Kaizer (2004b).

dynasty. It was later granted the status of a Roman *colonia* by the emperor Philip.[112] Many questions about the time of its foundation must at present remain unanswered, as Fergus Millar has pointed out: "what we cannot tell, given a complete lack of evidence, is whether the appearance of this new Greek city meant the creation of a new social and cultural formation for an existing population, or the introduction of new settlers, or a combination of both."[113] But a major step forward is made here by Kirkpatrick's argument—based on a variety of sources, ranging from inscriptions and archaeological material to literary texts such as Justin Martyr and coins—that the generally applied dichotomy between pagan (allochtonous) and Samaritan (local) that is so well-known from the late-Roman period obscures our view on the place and function of Mt Gerizim in Samarian society before the rabbinic reforms. The city central to my own contribution, Palmyra, has often been subject to questions as to whether it counts as a 'Greek city' or not.[114] Since both sides of the argument clearly have their own merits, the truth will probably lie somewhere in the middle. My paper looks (from an ancient historian's perspective) in detail at the different forms of sacrifice one encounters at Palmyra, and argues that, despite their apparent 'Orientalness', they simultaneously correspond quite neatly to the religious offerings made in the more 'typical' cities of the Graeco-Roman world. Building on an important thesis put forward by Paul Veyne, it is argued that the analogy between, on the one hand, the way in which a variety of sacrificial modes expresses interactions between man and god, and, on the other, the way in which humans relate to each other, can be drawn also for Palmyra, with the benefit of providing a more balanced view towards its otherwise uniquely local form of a Near Eastern religion.

The next two papers carry the discussion to northern Mesopotamia. The ancient historian and Orientalist scholar Peter Haider compares some of the religious vicissitudes of three cities which had once played a major role in the history of the Assyrian empire. But

[112] Millar (1990), p.53, referring also to the "remarkable variety of different Latin coin legends" which accompanied the newly acquired status.

[113] Id. (1993), p.368.

[114] For full references to this debate, see Sommer (2005), p.170-83, and Kaizer (2007).

whereas Assur (the ancient capital), Nineveh and Nisibis shared at least some part of their religious pasts, it is truly remarkable how dissimilar their respective religions seem to be—as far as the evidence is concerned—in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Nineveh and Nisibis boasted Greek influences on their religious cultures, of course in varying degrees, but the divine world of Assur was—in linguistic, architectural, and sculptural terms—populated by indigenous gods who managed to keep nearly completely out of the way of any Classical culture. But the variety of local religious life in the Near East could not be made more visible than by comparing Assur with nearby Hatra. Like Assur, Hatra's deities were—in the same linguistic, architectural, and sculptural terms—as indigenous as possible. But Hatra's own unique location, city plan, subsequent forms of government and legal framework, simultaneously led to a picture of its religious life which is very different from that which can be sketched of Assur. The art-historian and theologian Lucinda Dirven enhances our understanding of Hatrene religion not by looking at the imagery of the actual gods, but by focusing on the presence in the temples of life-size statues of kings and nobles. Her paper is written in part as preparation for a catalogue of all known sculpture from Hatra—which will be an absolutely invaluable contribution to Near Eastern studies in general once finished—and makes clear how essential the archaeological context is for a correct appreciation of statues and reliefs. Dirven argues strongly for a religious, rather than secular and honorary, understanding of these statues of human figures in religious settings.

The final paper is by the theologian and Semitist Jürgen Tubach, who closes this discussion with an early Christian perspective on Near Eastern religion. His linguistic study of symbolism of the sun in the works of the Syrian church father and poet Ephraem, who was originally from Nisibis but writing in Edessa, shows how this quite specific use of solar imagery ought to be interpreted against the background of pagan worship in this area. The traditionally held view among scholars, namely that the supreme gods of most localities in the Near East had become solar deities in the Hellenistic period, has of course long been corrected by a classic article of Henri Seyrig. Seyrig pointed out that in virtually all cases the Sun god in the local religions of the Classical Levant was never identified with the rele-

vant supreme deity, but did become one of the latter's main manifestations.[115] Indeed, even in Hatra, which pronounced itself on its coins as city 'of the Sun' and was said by Cassius Dio (68.31.2) to have been protected by the Sun god when under siege by Trajan's army, the actual divine world—as far as the epigraphic and other evidence is concerned—is dominated by other deities.[116] But the presence of the Sun—often, but certainly not always, in combination with the Moon—in various local Near Eastern religious contexts remains undeniable, and especially its portrayal in cosmic settings of the divine. Tubach's paper therefore rightly brings the astrological doctrines which were in vogue in Ephraem' day into the wider picture.

Even if far from comprehensive, this volume's focus on local aspects of worship brings out the distinct variety of the polytheistic cults in the Near East. Of course, the problem of whether 'Near Eastern religion' as such was a genuine entity, or rather a modern (or even ancient) construct, must remain unsolved. But it is to be hoped that this collection of papers, which individually led to inspiring discussions in the seminar series where they were originally presented, will—now that they have been put together—further stimulate other scholars and act in a thought-provoking manner for a wider audience. Together these papers not only advance our understanding of the religious history of the Hellenistic and Roman Levant, but also show to a variegated readership the potential of the wide range of models and approaches related to the study of the Near East. The imbalance in spread of evidence, both spatial and temporal, is unlikely to be solved completely in the near future by further excavations. But one ought to redress that imbalance by rigorously taking the direct local context as the basis for all discussion of religious phenomena. It is only with these local contexts as a starting point that one should aim to contextualise the various cults and other religious aspects within the setting of material from other places. A focus

[115] Seyrig (1971).

[116] Kaizer (2000b), esp. p.232-5. It has to be said that many scholars have wanted to identify the Sun god Shamash with the god Maren, 'Our Lord' in the city's leading triad (see above). Note that Millar (1993), p.522, while making rightly sceptical comments about the ubiquity of worship of the Sun in the Near East, states that "the best-attested cult of the Sun, at Hatra, is irrelevant in the context of Syria proper in the first century AD."

on the *variety* of local religious cultures can, then, lead to the construction of models and theories that will help us to understand better the historical development of society in general, in the whole range of regions and sub-regions which over time became part of the world as the Romans knew it, or thought to know it.

THE ANICONIC IMAGE OF THE ROMAN NEAR EAST[1]

MILETTE GAIFMAN

> The Syro-Phoenician religions mostly did not use images. In this area, the divinity was rather represented by a rock or a wooden pole: these are the idols of wood and stone against which prophets raged. For the Greek 'synnaos', we find among these religions the 'symbetylos': these are the gods who do not share a temple, but rather a cult rock. When, during the Greco-Roman period, divine images found widespread acceptance, the old gods continued to receive their worship in the form of cultic rocks (as can be shown in the cases of Tyre and Bostra), but now under the names of Heracles and Dusares. At the same time, however, numerous anthropomorphic representations of them continued to exist and appeared on coins. A sub-division of this litholatry was bomolatry: the cult of the altar, where the stone upon which the sacrificial animal is slaughtered appears at the same time as the object and as the place of veneration. Bomolatry was characteristic especially for the religion of the Arabs down to the Moslem period. Here the sacrificial rock represented the divinity; the sacrificial blood was smeared upon it.[2]

In these lines the historian E. Bickerman expressed a common view of the religions of the Near East.[3] According to this model, the pagan inhabitants of the Near East—the people referred to as Arabs and Syro-Phoenicians—preferred to worship their gods in the form of a stone or a pole; in other words, they adopted a so-called mate-

[1] I am grateful to Ted Kaizer for the opportunity to present this paper first in the seminar series at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and now in print. I am also thankful to Jaś Elsner, William A. P. Childs, Fritz Graf, Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, Youval Rotman and Hannah Cotton for their invaluable comments.

[2] Bickerman (1979), p.70, which is the English translation from the German original by id. (1937), p.106-7.

[3] E.g., generally on the Near East, see Kron (1992), p.60; on the Nabataeans, see Patrich (1990a) and (1990b); Wenning (2001), p.80; Healey (2001), p.185-9; on Arabians, see Mettinger (1995), p.69-71; Höfner (1983), p.410: "die Darstellung von Göttern in menschlicher Gestalt ist den Arabern ursprünglich fremd"; on the Phoenicians, see Stockton (1974-5), p.2: "Phoenician cult resisted the strong anthropomorphism of the European religions, preserving, more or less, the aniconic tendency which, despite lapses, contrasts Semitic religions so markedly to those of neighbouring peoples."

rial aniconism.[4] Furthermore, this theory claims that once the inhabitants of the Levantine coast and Arabia were exposed to anthropomorphic images of divinities of the Graeco-Roman religions, they accepted this new incoming influence while keeping their old traditions. The result of this process would be the existence of the aniconic and iconic side by side, where the first is the continuation of the old indigenous traditions of the region, and the second is a new product of Hellenization and Romanization.

In this paper, I will re-examine this view, and argue that this presumption of an alleged dichotomy between East and West, primitive and modern, simple and advanced, authentic and sophisticated, that is expressed in the choice of objects of worship, obstructs our vision and understanding of the cultic realities of the Roman Near East. For the preserved evidence indicates that the cultic realities were more varied, and included a much wider range of monuments, not only aniconic and iconic, but also semi-iconic. The existence of this spectrum at the very least disputes this binary model. Nonetheless, although one might argue that this model of the Ancient Near East fits well within the general western views of the Orient of the early modern and modern periods,[5] this is not a modern construct. Rather, as I will argue, it is a view that has its roots in Antiquity and was part of the discourse on cult practices in the Roman empire. My point is that this discourse—both in its ancient form and in its modern version—is ideological and rhetorically targeted to fulfil a specific function in the construction of Graeco-Roman identity, and did not reflect the actualities it pretended to describe.

First, I will examine issues of terminology and sources. The following account of the terms 'aniconic' and 'betyl' will illustrate how modern nomenclature reflects and regenerates the association between the Near East and the aniconic. Next I will consider the validity of this model through the examination of some material evi-

[4] The sub-category of material aniconism was introduced in Mettinger (1995), p.19. See below for further discussion.

[5] Said (1978) is the work that shaped the current perceptions of what these early modern and modern views of the Orient entail. On the relationship between the early modern and modern Western approaches to the Orient and modern scholarship of the Ancient Near East, see Bahrani (2003), p.13-72. The modern views of the East as shaping scholarly assessments can be observed in Bickerman's allusion to Moslem customs in his description of pagans of the region in Antiquity; see Bickerman (1979), p.70.

dence for Nabataean cult practices. I will demonstrate that the aniconic and iconic as well as semi-iconic coexisted in the cultic sphere of pagan religions of the Near East. Thus, the current model does not correspond with the existing evidence, and each class of monuments needs to be considered on its own terms in its Near Eastern context: the aniconic is not merely an indigenous avoidance of the figural, and the iconic is not simply an outcome of supposed foreign influence. Finally, I will return to the model articulated by Bickerman, and show that the aniconic image of the Near East has its roots in Antiquity, and that this contrast between East and West as expressed in cult, while not reflecting the variety of cultic realities, is part of the *discourse* on religious practices of the Roman period. This paradigm of typifying the East as aniconic was expressed in the writings on Eastern cult practices. This view of the East as aniconic was not a Western imposition of an outsider's view. Rather, it was part of a general discourse, which became distinctly apparent in the Roman period, a time when the Near East was a cultural melting pot of Semitic and Graeco-Roman traditions.[6]

Terms for Near Eastern Aniconism

Technical terms have a particular force in shaping our understanding of the past. The names and categories with which we tag and classify objects are not only lenses through which we view finds, but they are also reflections of our own basic perceptions of the material. The words 'aniconic' and 'betyl' illustrate the extent to which modern classifications shape and reflect as well as reinforce the modern image of Near Eastern religions. First, let us consider the modern category of aniconism, whose historiography reflects modern preconceptions of image worship in Antiquity, particularly in the case of the Near East. In 1988, B. Gladigow provided the formal definition for aniconic cults where "no images are known or accepted as objects of worship, especially not in the form of anthropomorphic images."[7] This formulation defines aniconism by negation, as the

[6] Millar (1993), p.12.

[7] Mettinger (1995), p.19, translating Gladigow (1988), p.472: "mit der Bezeichnung 'anikonische Kulte' wird eine Gruppe von Kulten zusammengefaßt, die keine 'Bilder' als Kultobjekte, insbesondere in Form von anthropomorphen Bildern kennen oder zulassen."

exclusion of the image as the object of worship. As examples, Gladigow mentions the worship of stones and poles as typical kinds of aniconism in polytheistic religions.[8] This has by and large been the way in which the exclusion of images has been understood in pagan religions: in place of the expected figural statue of a deity there was a non-figural object.[9]

Against this background, in 1995 T. Mettinger introduced the formal distinction between material aniconism—i.e. the worship of objects such as stelae, pyramids or poles—and empty space aniconism—i.e. the adoration of some 'sacred emptiness', such as an empty room or an empty throne.[10] The relatively recent introduction of this category for his treatment of the Ancient Near East shows that this type of aniconism is not usually seen as typical of pagan worship of the area:[11] Mettinger's scholarly agenda was to set Israelite religion within its general Near Eastern context and to underscore the existence of cult practices that are usually perceived as unique to the Israelite tradition in its neighboring cultures. For his purposes "sacred emptiness", which was at the heart of Israelite religion in the Jewish Temple of Jerusalem, was of particular significance. He thus emphasized the existence of empty space aniconism in the neighbouring pagan religions. Mettinger's strategy of introducing this category, which is instrumental for his argument, was perhaps simply an outcome of his own scholarly agenda. However, it demonstrates the extent to which he saw the need to set monuments such as the empty thrones of Astarte, or the empty throne of the sun

[8] Gladigow (1988), p.472, mentioned other religions where the presence of the god is evoked through epiphanic rituals. In addition, he dealt with the correlation between aniconism and monotheism.

[9] E.g. Donohue (1988), p.5 and p.221-5.

[10] See the full definition by Mettinger (1995), p.19: "cults where there is no iconic representation of the deity (anthropomorphic or theriomorphic) serving as the dominant or central cultic symbol, that is, where we are concerned with either (a) an aniconic symbol or (b) sacred emptiness. I shall call the first of these two types 'material aniconism' and the second 'empty space aniconism'." Notably, Gladigow (1988), p.473, mentioned types of sacred emptiness such as the empty throne in his article, but did not classify them under a separate subcategory.

[11] Metzler (1985-6) and Gladigow (1988) discussed the empty throne and the empty room in their treatments of aniconism. They did not mention these, however, in pagan contexts of the Near East, nor did they identify them as belonging to a single subcategory of aniconism.

(described in *De Dea Syria* 34[12]), under the general rubric of aniconism. Such monuments had not usually been understood by modern scholars as part of any aniconic tradition, in the sense of an alternative to the fully figural statue. Nonetheless, the case of the empty throne as described in *De Dea Syria* shows that at least in the eyes of the author of this particular text, such monuments were viewed in Antiquity in this way, as the replacements of an anthropomorphic image of the god.

The traces of this modern scholarly association between the Near East and material aniconism, particularly stone worship, can be seen in the articles of J.A. Overbeck from 1864 on Greek image worship.[13] These pieces are striking exemplars of the view of the Orient as the region of litholatry, which is seen in sharp contrast to the indigenous Greek traditions. In his two articles, Overbeck used the adjective "anikonisch" to describe an age in Greek worship which was imageless, "bildlos", or literally aniconic—with no icon.[14] At this postulated primitive period, which preceded the presumed Greek iconic age and is thus referred to as "vorikonisch", or pre-iconic, the Greeks first worshipped natural objects, such as trees and unwrought stones. Then they developed the adoration of manmade objects such as stelae, pyramids, planks and the like.[15] According to Overbeck, in the earliest stages of Greek religion, tree worship was indigenous, while the adoration of unwrought stones was foreign. He stressed that the origins of Greek litholatry were of least interest for his subject, since they were not Greek, but rather found in the Near East.[16] For Overbeck, the worship of unfashioned stones was one of the most

[12] See Lightfoot (2003), p.270-1: 'Εν αὐτῷ δὲ τῷ νηῷ ἐσιόντων ἐν ἀριστερῇ κέαται πρῶτα μὲν θρόνος Ἠελίου, αὐτοῦ δὲ ἔδος οὐκ ἔνι· μόνου γὰρ Ἠελίου καὶ Σεληναίης ξόανα οὐ δεικνύουσιν, 'In the temple itself as you go in on the left there is, first, a throne of the Sun, but no statue of him there. For the Sun and Moon are the only gods of whom they display no images.'

[13] Overbeck (1864a) and (1864b).

[14] These two articles are, if not the first, some of the earliest occurrences of the modern term "anikonisch" to describe a type of worship. In any case, they predate Sittl (1895), who is said by Bernhardt (1956), p.59, to have been the first to use the term.

[15] Overbeck (1864a), p.128.

[16] Ibid., p.146-7. Furthermore, Overbeck was searching for traces of the development of wrought stones, such as the ovoid or the pillar, from the unwrought Oriental betyl. He acknowledged that he could not prove this postulated process, although he could detect it, at p.157, in some examples in his cone-shaped betyls.

ancient types of aniconism; yet it was not genuinely Greek, but Oriental. Overbeck based his argument, that the origins of Greek stone worship were Near Eastern, on the likely origins of the Greek word *baitylos*, which can designate a type of animated stone. According to Overbeck, since the Greek word *baitylos* originates from the Semitic *byt-'l*, 'house of god', the belief in stones that are thought to be inhabited by some spirits was originally Near Eastern.

Baitylos, in its variety of transliterated forms betyl, baityl or baetyl, has been adopted in modern scholarship to designate non-figural cultic objects.[17] This word, its original meaning, its possible etymologies and their meanings, as well as the modern usage of the modern term betyl, are an example of a general problem of correlation between ancient words in their various permutations on the one hand, and material evidence on the other: modern scholars adopt an ancient term culled from the ancient sources and use it to classify the finds for which they need a taxonomy. The aim of this process is to define and understand the material evidence better. The implicit assumptions of this practice are: 1) the ancient word provides a good definition, 2) our terms should be what an ancient beholder of the object would have used to describe that object, and 3) through the adoption of ancient terms we can convey material finds to their ancient contextual frame. It is thus assumed that by using technical terms that are transliterated forms of ancient words, we are creating an authentic perspective on the finds and objects. However, the adoption of the term betyl is a good illustration of the problem: this practice does not necessarily lead to a better understanding of the material remains.[18]

In the particular case of betyls, the problem of modern nomenclature for ancient finds has two related aspects: First, the question of use or misuse of the term in modern scholarship. As already argued by G.F. Moore in 1903, the original Greek word was used to designate a particular type of stone, whereas in modern scholarship the word betyl is used for a variety of objects, such as pillars,

[17] It should be noted that the word as such is not defined in modern scholarship and this noncommittal definition reflects a very loose usage.

[18] Another word which presents a similar problem is the term *xoanon*, which is used to designate an ancient crude cult statue. However, the original Greek, prior to the second century AD, does not correspond with its modern usage. See Donohue (1988).

pyramids or cones.[19] A.B. Cook asserted in 1940 that "few terms in the nomenclature of Greek religion have been more loosely used than the word baitylos."[20] This discrepancy between ancient meaning and modern usage still persists.[21] The second issue involves the implications of the ancient meaning and connotations of the original word. This is exemplified by Overbeck's argument on the Oriental roots of Greek stone worship. The postulated Semitic etymology of the Greek word *baitylos*, from Hebrew *byt-'l*, is a hypostasis of the words: *byt* ('house') and *'l* ('god'). Together the two read 'house or dwelling of god'. The assumed Semitic origins combined with the use of the Greek word *baitylos* for a specific type of stone lead to the notion that an object named as *baitylos* is thought to be the dwelling of the divine.[22] In this case, the etymology has a particular force, for it is seen as an authentic reflection of the original meaning of the object in the eyes of the natives of the region, whose languages were Semitic. As in Overbeck's case, this kind of conflation between Semitic roots and a Greek word is seen, if not as a full proof, then at least as a strong indication of the native propensity towards litholatry and material aniconism in the Near East.[23]

The first aspect of the problem pertains to the result of the modern appropriation of an ancient term, and the second to the ancient meaning and significance of a word in its original context. Both, however, are strongly related, for one scholarly approach feeds on another. The practice of classifying a variety of objects (stelae, pyramids, cones or columns) from a variety of regions (Syria, Lebanon, Nabataea or Palestine), and from a variety of contexts (carved in

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[19] Moore (1903). Clearly, Moore was not the first to state the matter, since he claimed, p.205 n.1, that it was correctly stated in 1722.

[20] Cook (1914-1940) III.1, p.887.

[21] E.g. Wenning (2001), p.80, who examined Nabataean betyls, admitted this discrepancy: "The Nabataean betyls do not correspond to those described by Philo. Rather than round, black stones, they are stelae or shaped slabs raised in relief. But since they too are aniconic sacred stones, in modern research the term 'betyl' is associated with these types of monuments."

[22] Ibid. Well aware of the problem, Wenning asserted in his discussion of the Greek term βαίτυλια: "We do not know whether the term to describe particular stones as fallen from the heavens and animated with divine power has an older Eastern tradition or is in its precise meaning rather a Hellenistic erudition. It was but a small step to connect 'beth-el' with the sense of the 'dwelling of the god' or as the presence of the god in the stone. That is precisely what a betyl represents."

[23] In the passage quoted at the beginning of this paper, Bickerman referred to the god who shares the rock as "symbetylos"—the sharer of the betyl.

relief on a cliff, set in a shrine or struck on coin)—all represented under the same rubric as 'betyls'—creates the notion of a general phenomenon typical of the entire Near East. At the same time, the assumption that the Semitic etymology of the Greek word *baitylos* points to the significance of the object within its original indigenous context, and thus reflects the Near Eastern tendency of stone worship, colours the way in which we understand the significance of objects that are classified as betyls. Thus, a stele, a pyramid or an ovoid that is called a betyl is ultimately understood as a monument that was seen by the indigenous people of the region as a type of divine dwelling, inhabited by a god. The end result of this cycle is a vague general perception of the aniconic nature of the Near East, and a loss of specific understanding of the nature and significance of the particular objects.

Contrary to the common view, a careful examination of the sources, in Aramaic and Hebrew, Greek and Latin, shows that generally the word *baitylos* and its postulated Semitic etymologies do not prove, indicate or reflect an overall Near Eastern or Semitic propensity towards stone worship. This can be seen in the following examination of these sources, first Semitic and then Graeco-Roman.

Examination of the Semitic and Graeco-Roman Sources

First, in contrast to the Graeco-Roman sources, in the Near Eastern context *byt-'l* was not used to describe any kind of aniconic object, whether a stone, a stele or a cone. The existing evidence suggests that *byt-'l*, commonly transliterated as bethel, is a name, either of a god or of a place. However, the following overview ought to begin with the single occasion whereby the plural form *bty 'lhy'* has been interpreted by some as describing a type of object—a betyl. The formula 'to efface/remove these inscriptions from *bty 'lhy"* appears three times on a stele from Sefire.[24] This Aramaic inscription is a treaty made by the north Syrian ruler Matî'l with the king of Arpad Bir Ga'yah before 740 BC. J. Fitzmyer translated the term *bty 'lhy'* as "bethels", although the words literally mean 'houses of gods'.

[24] Sefire stele 2, face C, l.2,7,9. Cf. Fitzmyer (1995), p.125; Lemaire and Durand (1984), p.128; Donner and Röllig (1962), p.259. The original Aramaic reads: *lhldt sfry' 'ln mn bty 'lhy'*.

Fitzmyer, who was following other scholars, supported his translation first through references to the Greek word *baitylos*, that are of the first century AD at the earliest, where the word designates an animated stone.[25] These inscriptions, however, were not written on the object that the Greek word *baitylos* describes, typically a meteorite, a magical round stone said to have fallen from the sky.[26] Rather, they were inscribed on a flat surface, a stele. Fitzmyer's other references, to the Near Eastern material, do not support his translation either, for in none of the Near Eastern texts is a *byt-'l* a stele, a stone or a cone.[27] Most scholars understood *bty 'lhy'* as what the words literally mean, simply 'houses of gods' or 'temples'.[28] Furthermore, J. Greenfield argued that the verb *lwd*, which Fitzmyer translated as "efface", means "remove".[29] Thus, the logical interpretation of the formula that appears on the Sefire stele is that it is a warning against the removal of the inscriptions from the temples, which is where they were set up.[30] This, as Greenfield noted, is a standard stipulation of many similar texts.

Within the same body of material from Sefire the name *byt-'l* does occur in another treaty between the same rulers, of 672 BC.[31] On this second stele it designates a place. It is listed as one of the cities that would be ruined if Mati'el violates the treaty. Bethel here is a place name, paralleling the usage of this hypostasis in the Old Testament.[32] As a deity, Bethel is first attested as one of the overseeing gods of the treaty from 675/4 BC between the Assyrian king

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[25] As shown by Moore (1903). See detailed discussion below, p.53-5.

[26] Ibid. Of the ancient sources, Pliny (*HN* 35.135), who is referring to a Hellenistic source, provides the earliest description of the appearance of *baetyli*. He describes them as round stones said to have fallen from the sky. See detailed discussion below, p.53-4.

[27] Ibid.

[28] This is the translation provided in Donner and Röllig (1962), p.259: "Götterhäusern"; similarly in Lemaire and Durand (1984), p.259: "maisons des dieux". Note also Wenning (2001), p.80 n.1. A later parallel can be seen in an Aramaic inscription of 7/6 BC, from el-Mal, which reads *bnh byt 'lh*, 'X built a house of god' or 'built a temple'. See Naveh (1975), p.117; Millar (1993), p.14, and p.395-6.

[29] Greenfield (1968), p.241.

[30] As noted by Fitzmyer (1995), p.131-2.

[31] Sefire Stele 1, face A, l.34. Cf. Fitzmyer (1995), p.46-7; Donner and Röllig (1962), p.241; Lemaire and Durand (1984), p.122-3.

[32] This occurrence has been ignored in some of the prominent treatments of the subject such as Eissfeldt (1930) and Röllig (1999). On Bethel in the Old Testament, see further below.

Esarhadon and Baal I of Tyre, which states: "may Bethel and Anath-Bethel [deliver] you to the paws of a man-eating lion."[33] Similarly, the likely reconstruction of a line in Esarhadon's Succession Treaty of 672 BC, which mentions Bethel next to Anathbethel, suggests the same usage of this formula.[34]

The god further appears in the Aramaic documents of Elephantine: a letter of the late sixth or early fifth century BC sent to Syene bears a greeting to the temple of Bethel.[35] The deity is invoked again in an Aramaic version of *Psalm* 20, on the so-called Papyrus Amherst 63, a selection of Aramaic religious texts written in demotic script.[36] The hypostasis *byt 'l* is also a common component of names of gods and personal names. The gods Eshem-Bethel and Anath-Bethel appear in one of the Aramaic papyri of Elephantine.[37] It is most commonly attested as a theophoric element in personal names such as Bethel-nuri, Bethel-dalanni or Bethel-natan.[38] These occur-

[33] Translation adapted from Parpola and Watanabe (1988), II, p.27, text 5, l.IV.6. See also the earlier edition, by Borger (1956), p.109. The name Bethel appears as ^{d}*Ba-a-a-ti*—DINGIR MEŠ and *Anath*-Bethel appears as ^{d}*a-na-ti—ba-a-ti*—DINGIR MEŠ. The Akkadian element DINGIR MEŠ, a plural form of the word god, was equivalent to the West-Semitic *'l*, the singular form of the word god. Thus ^{d}*Ba-a-a-ti*—DINGIR MEŠ is equivalent to *byt -'l*. For discussion see Zadok (1977), p.28-31 and p.60-1, and Barré (1983), p.45-6. My thanks to Yoram Cohen for his kind help with this cuneiform text.

[34] Parpola and Watanabe (1988), II, p.49, text 6, l.467. The preserved parts include the name Bethel as part of a composite name and a mention of paws of a lion. These also appear in Esarhadon's treaty of 675/4 BC, which I have quoted above; see ibid., II, p.27, text 5 l.IV.6. See also Van der Toorn (1992) p.83.

[35] Porten and Yardeni (1986), n°A2.1,1.

[36] Kottsieper (1988), p.223-4, transliterated l.18 to Aramaic as *ya'ᵃnēnā mahár la-baytél*, which he translated into German as "Morgen antworte uns wahrlich Betel!" However, among the different groups of commentators and transliterators of the text there appears to be disagreement as to the reading of the vowel preceding *baytel*, which would change some of the meaning of the phrase. Thus, e.g., Nims and Steiner (1983), p.264, read the vowel as *El* and translated the phrase as "May El Bethel answer us tomorrow." See the discussion in Kottsieper (1988), p.238-9. The pioneering work on this text concerning religious matters of the community of Syene, which is dated either to the fourth or first century BC, is Bowman (1944). See, particularly on the god Bethel in this context, Wesselius and Delsman (1991).

[37] Cowley (1923), p.70 and p.72, n°22, col.7, l.124-5. The text specifies contributions to be made to the gods: seven *kerashin* to Ešem-Bethel and twelve *kerashin* to Anath-Bethel. On the combination Ḥerem-Bethel, which also appears in this archive, see Vincent (1937), p.593-621.

[38] Porten and Yardeni (1986), p.328-31.

rences have usually been taken as strong evidence for the reverence of the god Bethel amongst the Jews of Elephantine.[39]

The nature and identity of the god Bethel have been a subject of scholarly debate, particularly whether it is a Phoenician or Aramaic deity.[40] However, with regard to the question of aniconism and Near Eastern stone worship, the significance of this body of material is that it shows that nowhere in these texts is there any indication that the god Bethel was worshipped in the form of a stone or stele, or that the hypostasis *byt-'l* designated a venerated aniconic object thought to be inhabited by a divine spirit. Nonetheless, this has been the conjecture of some.[41]

It is perhaps for this very reason that the crucial passage for this discussion is Jacob's vision at the town of Bethel and the anointment of a standing stone described in *Genesis* 28:10-22. The story tells how Jacob, on his way from Beer-sheba to Harran, stops at a place and takes one of the stones there as a pillow (vs.10-2). He then has a dream. He sees a ladder with ascending angels and God speaks to him (vs.13-5). When he wakes up, Jacob realizes that the place was an abode of God and a gate of heaven (vs.16-7). The significant and crucial parts of the passage are worth quoting, for they are the source of most interpretations. I give the Hebrew original, the Greek Septuagint version and the Standard English translation:

יח וַיַּשְׁכֵּם יַעֲקֹב בַּבֹּקֶר, וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר-שָׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו, וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ, מַצֵּבָה;
וַיִּצֹק שֶׁמֶן, עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ. יט וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-שֵׁם-הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא, בֵּית-אֵל; וְאוּלָם לוּז
שֵׁם-הָעִיר, לָרִאשֹׁנָה. כ וַיִּדַּר יַעֲקֹב, נֶדֶר לֵאמֹר: אִם-יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי, וּשְׁמָרַנִי
בַּדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ, וְנָתַן-לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל, וּבֶגֶד לִלְבֹּשׁ. כא וְשַׁבְתִּי
בְשָׁלוֹם, אֶל-בֵּית אָבִי; וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי, לֵאלֹהִים. כב וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֹּאת, אֲשֶׁר-שַׂמְתִּי
מַצֵּבָה--יִהְיֶה, בֵּית אֱלֹהִים; וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֶּן-לִי, עַשֵּׂר אֲעַשְּׂרֶנּוּ לָךְ.

18) Καὶ ἀνέστη Ἰακὼβ τὸ πρωὶ, καὶ ἔλαβεν τὸν λίθον, ὃν ὑπέθηκεν ἐκεῖ
πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν στήλην καὶ ἐπέχεεν ἔλαιον ἐπὶ
τὸ ἄκρον αὐτῆς. 19) Καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου, οἶκος
Θεοῦ· καὶ Οὐλαμλοὺζ ἦν ὄνομα τῇ πόλει τὸ πρότερον. 20) Καὶ ηὔξατο

[39] Vincent (1937), p.562-681, particularly 562-5. See also Silverman (1985), p.221-31, who made the argument for the possible identification of the god Bethel with YHWH among the Jews of Elephantine.

[40] Barré (1983), p.45-8, and Smith (1990), p.25, argued that it is a primary god in the Phoenician pantheon. Van der Toorn (1997), p.3-5, and Röllig (1999), p.174, were of the opinion that it was an Aramaic god.

[41] This is the argument advanced by Eissfeldt (1930) and, more recently, Van der Toorn (1997). Both scholars, however, based their assertion on the Old Testament, particularly *Genesis* 28:10-22, discussed below.

Ἰακὼβ εὐχὴν λέγων, ἐὰν ᾖ Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ, καὶ διαφυλάξῃ με ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ταύτῃ, ᾗ ἐγὼ πορεύομαι, καὶ δῷ μοι ἄρτον φαγεῖν, καὶ ἱμάτιον περιβαλέσθαι, 21) καὶ ἀποστρέψῃ με μετὰ σωτηρίας εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου, καὶ ἔσται μοι Κύριος εἰς Θεόν. 22) Καὶ ὁ λίθος οὗτος, ὃν ἔστησα στήλην, ἔσται μοι οἶκος Θεοῦ· καὶ πάντων ὧν ἐάν μοι δῷς, δεκάτην ἀποδεκατώσω αὐτά σοι.

18) So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19) He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20) Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21) so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, 22) and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will sure give one tenth to you."

Two separate issues emerge in this passage: first, the question of the name *byt-'l* and second, the significance of the stone which served as Jacob's pillow. *Byt-'l* here is only the name of the town, previously called Luz. In fact, the entire story is an aetiology for the new name, as is stressed in vs.19. Nowhere is the stone called a *byt-'l.*[42] Jacob's pillow is first a stone that was taken by chance, an *evn*, and was then set up as a *maṣṣebah,* or pillar in the English version. The translator of the Septuagint did not use the Greek word *baitylos* to describe the stone set up by Jacob. The word *maṣṣebah* was translated as *stele.*

The Septuagint proves furthermore that there is no connection between the biblical place named *byt-'l* and the Greek word for animated stone *baitylos*. In vs.19, the Hellenistic translators chose to render *byt-'l* with the Greek equivalent *oikos theou*, 'house of god' (as opposed to the New Standard English version, which has 'Bethel').[43] Contrary to any possible expectations, *baitylos* does not appear in the Septuagint at all. Furthermore, on other occasions the Hellenistic translators of the Old Testament did choose to transliterate *byt-'l* into Greek. In *Genesis* 35:6-8, for example, the town of *byt-'l* appears in the Septuagint version as βαιθήλ, a transliteration which is close to the Hebrew original. This Greek translation of *byt-'l* as βαιθήλ recurs

[42] Contrary to common readings such as those by Mettinger (1995), p.131 and p.197.

[43] In doing so, the Greek translation blurs the difference which is underscored in the Hebrew original between the idea of a house of god (*byt elohim*) and the name of the place (*byt-'l*).

on numerous occasions in the Septuagint,[44] and was adopted by writers such as Philo (*Confus.* 74.4) and Josephus (*Ant.* 1.342.4). To the best of my knowledge, scholars of the subject ignored the translation of the Hebrew *byt-'l* in the Old Testament as βαιθήλ, although it disproves the alleged connection between the Greek animated stone, the *baitylos*, and the stele set up by Jacob at the town of *byt-'l*.

The second, more difficult issue is the religious significance of the stone that was set up by Jacob as a *maṣṣebah*. This question leads us to the vast tradition of commentary and interpretation of the Old Testament. Here, some very basic observations on the text can be made. The stele fulfilled one of the typical functions of other *maṣṣebot* described in the Old Testament: it served as a marker.[45] In this particular case it commemorated Jacob's vision, and thus marked the presence of God in the town.[46] The main difficulty arises with vs22: 'and this pillar shall be God's house'. Some have seen this as suggesting that the stone itself was to be perceived as God's abode, that God was to be thought of as dwelling in the stele.[47] This interpretation, which may seem possible, does not accord with the general context of the passage itself. Vs22 is a vow to establish an institutionalised cult at the site, as indicated not only by the promise to build a house of God, a *byt -'lhim*, a temple, but also by the pledge for a tithe.[48] The stele then is a marker of the vision and a witness to the

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[44] *Genesis* 12:8, 13:3, 35:1, 35:3,6-8,15-6; *Joshua* 6:26, 7:2, 8:9, 12:9, 15:30, 16:1-2, 18:13; *Judges* 1:22-3, 2:1, 4:5, 20:18,26,31, 21:2,19; *1 Samuel* 7:16, 10:3, 13:2; *1 Kings* 12:29,32, 13:1,4,10-1, 16:34; *2 Kings* 2:2-3,23, 10:29, 17:28, 23:4,15,17; *1 Chronicles* 7:28; *2 Chronicles* 13:19; *Nehemiah* 2:28; *Song of Solomon* 2:9; *Jeremiah* 31:13; *Amos* 3:14, 4:4, 5:5, 7:10,13; *Zechariah* 7:2; *1 Maccabees* 9:50.

[45] On *maṣṣebot* in the Old Testament see LaRocca-Pitts (2001) and Graesser (1972), p.205-27, who concluded that, contrary to the general view, *maṣṣebot* had a variety of functions (e.g. grave markers, border markers, personal monuments, used in worship) and could be approved or condemned depending on context. Graesser (1972), p.37, discussed the general function of the *maṣṣebah* as a marker and distinguished between functions of markers: memorial, legal, commemorative and cultic.

[46] As noted by Graesser (1972), p.46-7.

[47] E.g. Baumgarten (1981), p.202; Hutter (1993), p.100-1; Pury (1975), p.425; Eissfeldt (1930).

[48] Pury (1975), p.425, argued that the meaning of *byt -'lhim* of vs22 is betyl in its modern sense, rather than 'house of god', although the same term appears four verses earlier, in vs17, where Jacob proclaims that the place where he had the dream is a *byt -'lhim*, namely a house of God. Nothing in the text suggests that one needs to impose this kind of translation on the passage. Part of Pury's argument

vow.[49] The idea that in the future the presence of the divine in the town of Bethel will be limited to the object, does not agree with the vision and the notion that the place, not the stone, is a house of god, a *byt elohim* as expressed in vs17. The ladder in the dream reinforces the idea of distance between God and Jacob. It is thus illogical to suggest that the vow is a promise that upon Jacob's safe return, God's presence in the shrine will be limited to the particular stone and that God will literally reside in it. This does not preclude the possibility that there was a *maṣṣebah* in the biblical town of Bethel, which was a recipient of the ritual act of anointment. As such, this object would have been sacred due to its history as Jacob's pillar, a recipient of veneration and a marker of divine presence.[50]

All these observations will certainly not deter commentators from arguing that the religious meaning of *Genesis* 28:22 is that God will literally reside in the stone, and that in the eyes of the ancient visitors to the town of Bethel, God was residing in Jacob's pillar, which was a betyl. Obviously, there is no end to this discussion, which enters the problematic field of defining the exact nature of divine presence in *Genesis* 28 in particular and in the Old Testament in gen-

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is based on the Sefire inscription described above, which mentions the removal of the inscriptions from the houses of gods. He thus argued that the Sefire stele and Jacob's pillar were not merely markers of a treaty under the protection of the gods, but that these were literally betyls in the modern sense. The fact that a stele can mark the presence of a god in a place, and mark a vow for the future establishment of a shrine or, as in the case of the Sefire tablets, can commemorate a treaty guaranteed by a god, and therefore be set in shrine, a *byt 'lh'*, is no reason to call the stele a 'betyl'. Nothing in the evidence suggests that some ancient viewers thought that such stelae were possessed by divine powers, although this possibility cannot be ruled out. Using the term betyl imposes on the evidence notions that are not apparent in the first place. Note ibid., p.425 n.291, which is revealing in this context: "Il est vrai—nous l'avons dit—que le mot grec βαίτυλος, dont derive notre 'bétyle' en français, ne désignait probablement pas des *maṣṣebôt*, mais plutôt de petites meteorites de forme quelconque, dotées de vertus magiques. Mais il semble que le terme français ait 'récupéré' dans une certaine mesure son antécédent sémitique, puisqu'il s'applique maintenant surtout à des pierres du type menhir." Here Pury admitted his role as a modern scholar: he adopted a modern term and in doing so supposedly retrieved the lost past. Nonetheless, this postulated past is not necessarily presented by the evidence.

[49] LaRocca-Pitts (2001), p.210.

[50] It should be further noted that one cannot exclude the possibility that an ancient visitor to the site might have thought that in some sense God was present in the stone itself, as suggested by Graesser (1972), p.47. However, contrary to Graesser's assertion that this was highly likely, such speculation cannot be substantiated, nor can it be refuted, for it entails the reconstruction of ancient perceptions that are unavailable to us.

eral. Nonetheless, whichever way one chooses to understand *Genesis* 28:10-22, it is neither an illustration of an overall Near Eastern propensity towards stone worship nor a concrete testimony of the existence of worship of betyls in the biblical town of Bethel. At most, it is an aetiological story, which tells the history of a sanctuary in the town of Bethel, where there may have been a famous sacred stele that marked Jacob's vision of God. Generally, the Semitic Bethel is either a name of a god or a name of a place. None of the sources would suggest that the god Bethel was perceived in the form of a stone.[51] The evidence from the book of *Genesis* further illustrates that no aniconic object was called *bethel* in the original Hebrew, nor was it called *baitylos* in the Greek translation. The Septuagint shows that the Greek word *baitylos* has nothing to do with the biblical town of *byt-'l*, which has been translated into Greek as βαιθήλ. Jacob's pillar of the biblical town of Bethel, the ultimate Near Eastern textual basis for such notions that the ancient Semitic god Bethel was perceived in the form of a stone, or that the worship of betyls typifies the ancient Near East, is a very loose cornerstone, an insufficient foundation for these grand scholarly structures.

The Greek *baitylos* makes its appearance in the first century AD, in a passage that has, to the best of my knowledge, been ignored by scholars who treat the subject of betyls.[52] The word appears in the collection of letters written by an anonymous author, known only by his pseudonym Chion of Heraclea:[53]

> Ἀναστάντες οὖν ἐξῄειμεν ὀψόμενοι τὴν πόλιν, ὡς ᾠόμεθα, ἐγώ τε καὶ Ἡρακλείδης καὶ Ἀγάθων ὁ χρηστός, εἵποντο δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τῶν θεραπόντων Βαιτὺλος καὶ Ποδάρκης καὶ Φίλων ὁ θρασύς, ἡμεῖς μὲν ἄνοπλοι, τῶν δὲ θεραπόντων παρήρτητο ἕκαστος μάχαιραν, Φίλων μὲν γὰρ καὶ δόρυ ἐκόμιζε.

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[51] In the Old Testament, the town of Bethel appears on several occasions. Although traditionally these occurrences have been understood as references to the town, some commentators, e.g. Eissfeldt (1930) and Mettinger (1995), p.131, read these occurrences (notably *Gen.* 31:13, 35:7) as references to the god Bethel, rather than to the town. This served as part of a general argument that Bethel was perceived as a stone. However, since in none of these texts is there any kind of association between Bethel and a stone, there is no point entering into a discussion on the endless complex commentaries on biblical texts.

[52] E.g. this reference is not mentioned in any of the following accounts of the term: Moore (1903); Cook (1914-1940), III, p.887-90; Ribichini (1999); Wenning (2001).

[53] *Chionis Epistolai* 4.3, text adapted from Malosse (2004), p.26-8, and translation following Düring (1951), p.52-3.

> Well, when we had risen, we went to see the city as we believed, I and Heraclides and good Agathon, followed by some of our servants, Baetylus, Podarces and bold Philo. We had no weapons, but the servants wore each of them a dagger and bold Philo a spear too.

In this paragraph, which possibly includes the earliest attested occurrence of *baitylos* in the literary evidence,[54] the word is simply a name of a slave. The context is a pseudo-Hellenistic setting: Chion of Heraclea is in fourth-century Athens, where he is studying in Plato's Academy. However, most scholars agree that the text is to be dated to the first century AD.[55] The interest in this passage is the fact that here *baitylos* is related neither to a stone nor to a god. Rather, it is the first in the list of three names of slaves who are all armed and whose role is to protect the unarmed Chion, Heraclides and Agathon. The other two slaves have names that are positive qualities: *podarkes* is the swift-footed, and *philon*, the loved one, is explicitly described as the bold one who carries the spear. One cannot make much of *baitylos*. However, it is possible that here it could stand for some positive quality related to physical strength. Further interest in this passage can be seen when it is considered next to the large body of personal names, attested in the Egyptian papyri, whose ending is Bethel. One may suggest that *baitylos* implies that the slave was of Semitic origin.

Next, the words *baitylos* and *baitylia* appear in Philo of Byblos' *Phoenician History*, quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Preparation for the Gospel* (1.10.16), written in the fourth century AD.[56] First *baitylos* is a name of a god:

> Παραλαβὼν δὲ ὁ Οὐρανὸς τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς ἀρχὴν ἄγεται πρὸς γάμον τὴν ἀδελφὴν Γῆν, καὶ ποιεῖται ἐξ αὐτῆς παῖδας τέσσαρας, Ἥλον τὸν καὶ Κρόνον, καὶ Βαίτυλον, καὶ Δαγὼν ὅς ἐστι Σίτων, καὶ Ἄτλαντα.

[54] This is at least suggested by a quick TLG search.

[55] It is generally agreed that, although this epistolary novel pretends to be written by Chion of Heraclea, who studied with Plato in Athens in the fourth century BC, it is a work of the first century AD if not of a later date possibly in the fourth century AD. See Billault (1977); Konstan and Mitsis (1990); Robiano (1991); Rosenmeyer (1994); Malosse (2004), p.101-5.

[56] See also *FGrH* III 567.B. Philo wrote in the late first and early second century AD. He is known to have died under Hadrian. See Moore (1903), p.201, and the commentary by Baumgarten (1981), at p.189-90.

> And Ouranus, having succeeded to his father's rule, took to himself in marriage his sister Ge, and begot by her four sons, Elos who is also Kronos, and Baitylos, and Dagon who is Siton, and Atlas.

Baitylos is one of the four sons of Ouranos and Ge, two of whom have explicitly Phoenician names. The other gods mentioned in the passage are transliterations of Phoenician gods: Elos is *'l* and Dagon is *dgn*.[57] Thus, *Baitylos* here is probably the Greek transliterated form of the god Bethel. The object *baitylion* appears further below in the same passage (Euseb. *praep. Ev.* 1.10.23), where Philo is quoted again:

> ἐπνόησε θεὸς Οὐρανὸς βαιτύλια, λίθους ἐμψύχους μηχανησάμενος.
>
> Ouranos invented baitylia, contriving animated stones *empsychoi lithoi*.[58]

The god invented special stones that were endowed with a *psyche*. As pointed out by Moore, according to Plato the adjective *empsuchos* means something with the power of self-motion. He thus interpreted *empsuchos* as animated.[59] Notably, the form of the word in the neuter strongly suggests that the *baitylia* are a derivative of *baitylos*. *Baetyli* also occur in Pliny's treatise on different types of stones, where he is referring to a Hellenistic source (*HN* 37.135, following Loeb ed. 1962):

> *Sotacus et alia duo genera fecit cerauniae, nigrae rubentisque; similes eas esse securibus. Ex his quae nigrae sint ac rotundae, sacras esse; urbes per illas expugnari et classes; baetulos vocari; quae vero longae sint, ceraunias.*
>
> Sotacus distinguishes also two other varieties of the stone, a black and a red, resembling axe-heads. According to him, those among them that are black and round are supernatural objects; and he states that

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[57] See Baumgarten (1981), p.190, 202-3.

[58] See also *FGrH* III 568.A. Translation adapted from Moore (1903), p.199 of: ἐπνόησε θεὸς Οὐρανὸς βαιτύλια, λίθους ἐμψύχους μηχανησάμενος. See Baumgarten (1981), p.202-3.

[59] Moore (1903), p.199-200, who relied on Plato, *Phaedrus* 245e: πᾶν γὰρ σῶμα ᾧ μὲν ἔξωθεν τὸ κινεῖσθαι ἄψυχον· ᾧ δὲ ἔνδοθεν αὐτὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἔμψυχον· ὡς ταύτης οὔσης φύσεως ψυχῆς. He also referred to the translation of this passage in Cicero, *Tusc.* 1.23.543: *Inanimum est enim omne quod pulsu agitatur externo; quod autem animatum est, id motu cietur interiore et suo; nam haec est propria natura animi et vis.* In addition, he summarized a story from the *Orphica Lithica* about the stone given to Helenus by Apollo, a stone which was an *empsuchon* mountain stone. This lodestone would give responses to its possessor after proper purification rituals and sacrifices.

> thanks to them cities and fleets are attacked and overcome, their name being *baetuli* while the elongated stones are *cerauniae*.

Here, *baetuli* are supernatural stones that help vanquish an enemy. Thus, for Philo and Pliny, the *baitylion* or *baetulos* is a stone endowed with some unique powers.[60] A much later source, an excerpt of the Late Antique author Damascius, whose *Life of Isidorus* was quoted by Photius in his *Bibliotheca*, offers further ideas on the term.[61] Damascius tells the story of how a certain Eusebius became the possessor of a betyl, a prophetic stone whose responses he interpreted. Having left the town of Emesa one night, Eusebius wandered to a mountain where there was a shrine of Athena. As he was resting after the journey, he saw a ball of fire coming down from the sky and a huge lion next to it, which immediately disappeared. When Eusebius approached the place, he found a stone, which he recognized as a betyl. In reply to his question, the stone said that it belonged to Gennaios whom the Heliopolitans honor in the temple of Zeus in the shape of a lion. He then took the object with him, and became the interpreter of the stone's oracles by reading the letters inscribed on it and deciphering the sound which it emitted when banged against a wall.

This story, which was dismissively transmitted by the ninth-century bishop Photius,[62] sets Eusebius' oracular stone in a category similar to Pliny's or Philo's special stones. In these Greek and Latin sources, a *baitylos* is an object with supernatural powers: it is an animated stone, a stone that would bring conquest in war, or an object of prophecies. As pointed out by G.F. Moore, in these contexts it certainly did not denote an aniconic object of worship. Moore also insisted that the betyl was of small size, as suggested by Damascius' description. Thus, betyls designated a specific type of stone, which may be qualified more as a type of amulet rather than purely an object of worship. *Baitylos*, usually seen as a Semitic word transliter-

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[60] For a full discussion of all the references to the term, see Moore (1903) and also Fauth (1964).

[61] The passage comes from Photius, *Epitoma Photiana* n°203. For a critical edition of Damascius' fragments with translation, see Athanassiadi (1999), p.308-11, n°138. See also Fick (2004), p.158-61.

[62] Translation and text adapted from Athanassiadi (1999), p.310-1: Ταῦτα ληρήσας καὶ πολλὰ τοιαῦτα ὁ τῶν βαιτυλίων ὡς ἀλήθῶς ἄξιος, τὸν λίθον διαγράφει καὶ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ, 'Having babbled forth these and many other such idiocies, the man truly worthy of little baetyls describes its appearance'.

ated into Greek, received a purely Greek context in numerous Late Antique and Byzantine lexica.[63] For example, in the *Etymologicum Magnum*:[64]

> Βαίτυλος δὲ ἐκλήθη καὶ ὁ λίθος, ὃν ἀντὶ τοῦ Διὸς ὁ Κρόνος κατέπιεν. εἴρηται δέ, ὅτι ἡ Ῥέα βαίτῃ αἰγὸς σπαργανώσασα τῷ Κρόνῳ ἐπεδέδωκεν· παρὰ τὴν βαίτην βαίτυλος, βαίτη δὲ σημαίνει τὴν διφθέραν.
>
> *Baitulos* is also the name of the stone, which Kronos swallowed in place of Zeus. It is told that Rhea, having wrapped it in goat-skin, gave it to Kronos. *Baitulos* comes from *baite*, *baite* means the skin.

Here, *baitylos* is a particular mythological stone, which was given by Rhea to Kronos in place of the infant Zeus,[65] and the root of *baitylos* is from the Greek *baite*. Although this etymology has been usually rejected, the interest here is not in the veracity of this claim. This source provides an etymology that relates the word *baitylos* to a Greek mythological context; it thus illustrates that in this stage of its history, the word has found not only a Greek mythological context, but also allegedly authentic Greek roots. Even if the true etymology of *baitylos* was Semitic, it was no longer defined or perceived in this way in Late Antiquity. The association between Zeus and *betylos* is further seen on an inscribed altar of the third century AD from Dura-Europos:[66]

> Θεῷ πατρῴῳ / Διὶ Βετύλῳ / τῶν πρὸς τῷ / Ὀρόντῃ Αὐρ(ήλιος) / Διφιλιανὸς στρα(τιώτης) / λεγ(εῶνος) δ' Σκυ(θικῆς) Ἀντ(ωνειανῆς) / εὐξάμενος / ἀνέθηκεν.
>
> To the ancestral god Zeus Betylos, [god] of the dwellers along the Orontes, Aurelius Diphilianus, soldier of the fourth Legion Scythica Antoniniana, has dedicated [this altar] in gratitude.

There are two possible readings here of the word *betylos*: either as a name of a god, or as a name of an object. Since Bethel recurs on numerous occasions as a Near Eastern deity, and the Greek *baitylos*

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[63] E.g. Herodian, Περὶ καθολικῆς προσῳδίας VI; Theognostos, Κανόνες 61,21, and the *Etymologium Gudianum*. See Moore (1903), p.201-2, who concluded: "a comparison of these passages plainly shows that they are all ultimately derived from one source."

[64] Text adapted from Lasserre and Livadaras (1976), II, p.386.

[65] According to Hesiod, *Theogony* 498-500, the stone was preserved in Delphi. Pausanias (10.24.6) describes it and says that it is of no great size. See West (1966), p.303, who pointed out that the Delphic stone might have been a meteorite.

[66] H. Seyrig in *Rep.* IV (1933), nº168, pl.XV.1; *SEG* VII, nº341.

mentioned in the Phoenician theogony appears first as a name of the god, the easier reading of *betylos* is as the transliterated form of the Semitic Bethel. This would suggest the juxtaposition of the Greek god Zeus and the Semitic Betylos/Baitylos.[67] Alternatively, *betylos* may be read as an object in the original sense of the word *baitylos*: a magical animated stone, possibly alluding to the myth of the infant Zeus, as it was transmitted by the Late Antique sources. This interpretation, which would suggest a juxtaposition of god-Zeus and object-*betylos*, would have parallels such as Zeus Bomos in the Syrian limestone massif.[68] This reading of *betylos* is more difficult, since the significance of the juxtaposition god-Zeus and object-*betylos* is not so straightforward. Is this Zeus of the stone who was worshipped in the form of a *betylos*, or residing in such an object?[69] Or possibly, the association between Zeus and *betylos* simply relates to the infant Zeus of the myth, and thus Zeus *betylos* is Zeus who was replaced and saved by the stone. These possibilities are valid, but cannot be substantiated as the evidence stands.

Betylos of the altar from Dura-Europos fits well within the general history of the Greek *baitylos*: this word is no testimony for the alleged long tradition of Near Eastern material aniconism, typified by stone worship, dating back to the age of *Genesis*. Rather, *baitylos*, which was used to describe both a deity and an object with divine powers, created an association between god and object in a clear way only in the Late Roman empire and in Late Antiquity. As such, it does not point to an overall Near Eastern phenomenon: rather, it emerges as typical for the region of northern Syria and Lebanon. As the evidence stands, animated stones associated with divine powers that were called *baityli*, were a product of the particular religious cultures

[67] The dedication from the area of Kafr Nebo in the Limestone Massif, dated to AD 224, to 'Seimios Symbetylos and Leon, the ancestral gods', may be seen as another Greek transliteration of the Semitic divine name Bethel into *Baitylos*. See *IGLS* II, nº376, and also Callot and Marcillet-Jaubert (1984), p.198-200. Here *Symbetylos* would parallel the occurrences of Bethel in the Semitic material as part of compounded names, well attested already in the seventh century BC, particularly in the Elephantine papyri.

[68] Ibid., p.187-91 and p.195-200. The dedication to Zeus Bomos (*IGLS* II, nº569) was found at Burj Baqirha and dates to AD 161. Another possibility is Zeus Madbachos, from Jebel Sheikh Barakat, also in the Limestone Massif. Madbachos is usually interpreted as having the semitic root *dbk*, 'sacrifice', and is thus usually interpreted as a parallel to Zeus Bomos. Cf. Vincent (1937), p.579-80; Millar (1993), p.253-5.

[69] As asserted by H. Seyrig, in *Rep.* IV (1933), p.70.

of the Roman Near East, in which the local Semitic and the Graeco-Roman traditions had become a homogenous entity.[70]

Cultic Realities as Reflected in the Material Evidence

The main question with regard to the aniconic image of the Near East is to what extent the existing model holds true. How much material evidence is there to prove that the indigenous people of the Near East genuinely preferred to worship their gods as pillars and stones rather than in figural form? Obviously, one cannot answer this question in the scope of this article: every region and every case needs to be considered on its own terms, and I make no claims to undertake such a project here. My aim, rather, is to illustrate a general point, namely that the misusage of common terminology and the concept of the aniconic Near East blur our vision of the cultic realities, and obstruct our ability to interpret material finds. The current binary paradigm does not leave room for the variety that is presented by the material and thus skews our vision. The examination of finds shows that they consist of a range of forms, for which the distinction aniconic/iconic and the general most commonly used term betyl to describe objects are not only insufficiently specific, but also create a distorted understanding.

As a case in point, I shall consider some of the evidence for Nabataean cult monuments and the iconography of the Nabataean god Dushara or Dusares. Generally, the Nabataeans have been known as 'observers of aniconism', or at least as having a strong preference towards aniconic worship.[71] The material remains that support

[70] As noted by Millar (1993), p.12, Bickerman (as quoted at the beginning of this paper) based his argument on evidence from the Late Roman empire. However, following this observation, the attested scanty evidence needs to be considered within its own context, rather than as an expression of a hidden past.

[71] Dalman (1908), p.55. More recently, the main proponent of this view is Patrich (1990a) and (1990b), who argued for the existence of a theology which repudiated images, although there is no text to support this view. His theory is based purely on interpretation of archaeological finds and his argument for the existence of iconoclastic activities under Nabataean rule. This has been accepted by Mettinger (1995), p.57-68. Other scholars have accepted the general view of Nabataean aniconism with the modification that it was only *de facto* aniconism and not programmatic, thus questioning the notion of Nabataean aniconic or iconoclastic ideology. See Healey (2001), p.156 and p.185-9, and Wenning (2001), p.79-80. For the distinctions in types of aniconism, see Mettinger (1995), p.18-9.

these assertions are the indigenous traditions conspicuous in the finds of Petra, and the iconography of Nabataean coins. The archaeological works in Petra have revealed some hundreds of carved votive niches, with or without carved objects in them, some with a single stele, some with a group of stelae and some with a round object. Several Nabataean coins carry an image of a non-figural object, such as a pillar or an ovoid, accompanied by the name of a local god. Clearly, these finds point to some very strong local tradition of using geometric forms.

The particular force of terminology in shaping one's view can be seen in this case. The niches and stelae, as well as the objects on the coins, are all classified by moderns as 'betyls', and are normally interpreted as denoting the 'presence of the god in the stone', or as 'representations of the god'.[72] The term betyl only implies that the object is non-figural and fails to describe its particular shape. The word is deployed for an ovoid, a pillar or a stele. The assumption behind this approach is that the importance of the form is simply the fact that the object is non-figural, and thus categorizes the object by negation. The richness and variety of the aniconic, as found in the carvings of Petra and on Nabataean coins, suggest, on the contrary, that the particular geometric form of the monument is significant and carries some meaning.

For example, the importance of the particular form is apparent on Nabataean coins from three cities that are all labeled with the name of the god Dushara. Coins of Madaba, from the reigns of Geta and Elagabalus, depict a column on a double base that is crowned with two or three flat objects and set inside a tetrastyle temple [PLATE II].[73] These images are accompanied by the legend ΔΟΥΣΑΡΗΣ ΜΗΔ or ΜΗΔΑΒ and suggest that in this city there was a shrine of Dushara, whose distinguishing feature was a particular column. Coins of Adra'a with the legend ΔΟΥΣΑΡΗΣ ΘΕΟΣ ΑΔΡΑΗΝΩΝ or its variants [e.g. PLATE III] are first attested in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and continue to the age of Gallienus. These issues have an image of a conical stone resting on a platform that is raised on two columns and usually has horizontal lines that are possibly steps. On either side of the cone there is a head of an ibex.[74]

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[72] Wenning (2001).

[73] Spijkerman (1978), p.184-5, n^{os}8,12; Kindler (1983), p.86-7, n^{os}6-7.

[74] *BMC Arabia*, p.15, n^{o}2, pl.III; Spijkerman (1978), p.60-5, n^{os}1-3,12,17; Kindler

The coinage of Adra'a suggests that in this city the distinguishable cultic monument of Dushara was a conical stone, which was markedly different from the column depicted on the coins of Madaba.

A more complex structure appears on coins associated with Dushara from the city of Bostra, first struck under the reign of Caracalla [PLATE IV]. These coins show a platform approached by steps, on top of which there are three tapering columns.[75] The central one is taller than the other two and is surmounted by a varying number of elements that are hard to identify, and are usually described as 'cake-like objects'. A single similar object crowns the side columns as well.[76] On an issue from the reign of Caracalla there are two small figures standing in profile on the platform, facing the columns on either side. The labels on the coins with this image vary. The earliest one has only the city's name. The connection with Dushara becomes apparent on the coinage from the reign of Elagabalus, with the legend: ΔΟΥΣΑΡΕΗΣ ΘΕΟΣ. The later issues, from the reigns of Trajanus Decius and Herennius Etruscus and Hostilianus, are labelled *ACTIA DUSARIA COL METR BOSTRA* or similar variants. This imagery suggests that the particular platform with the three columns is a representative monument for the cult of Dushara in the city of Bostra.

The three types of cultic structures on the coins of these three cities show that in each locality there was a different monument of cult associated with Dushara. The symbol of worship of the god in Adra'a was distinctly different from that of Madaba or Bostra. The significance of the image on the coin is the unique structure that it portrays, which served the minters of the coin as a mode of self-representation of the local cult. The rendering of the particular monument of cult was a vehicle for advertising and asserting the particular local tradition of worshipping this great Nabataean god. By calling all the objects depicted on these coins 'betyls', we lose the sense of the significance of these monuments in their own right at

(1983), p.85-6, n^{os}1-4. The horizontal lines that are interpreted by most scholars as a ladder or steps appear on most coins starting from the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

[75] Spijkerman (1978), p.76-7 and p.86-9, n^{os}38,42-4,66,72; Kindler (1983), p.115-6, p.122 and p.125, n^{os}30,33,47,55.

[76] The nature of these peculiar elements has been a source of great debate, to the point that scholars thought that the image is that of a winepress, although this view generally has been rejected. For a detailed summary of this discussion, see Kindler (1983), p.59-60 and p.82, who suggested that these elements are loaves of bread.

the particular locality. If we were to set aside the word 'betyl' and restrict our vocabulary to words such as ovoid, empty niche, pillar or stele, we would soon come to realize the rich variety of the non-figural, which is not merely an avoidance of the figure.

Not only is the term betyl insufficiently descriptive, it assumes a particular meaning of the monument in the eyes of the Ancient Near Eastern viewer: it carries the notion of the presence of the god or divine spirit within the object itself. This, in turn, implicitly suggests a Nabataean belief in some stone-gods. However, none of the stelae in Petra, nor any other aniconic Nabataean monument, is described in the Nabataean inscriptions as a *byt-'l* or a *baitylos*. Furthermore, three Nabataean inscriptions accompanying empty niches or niches with stelae provide us with some local terms for such monuments, namely *nṣbt'*, *nṣyb'* and *mṣb'*.[77] The basic meaning of these terms appears to be an erect or standing monument, as suggested by their root *nṣb*. These words thus refer to the form of the object, which is a standing stone or a stele. Yet, the words *nṣbt*, *nṣyby* and *mṣb'* are typically translated into English as 'betyl', although we do not have enough evidence to suggest that the Nabataean terms are equivalent to the English meaning of 'betyl' as the aniconic representation of a god.[78] Thus, the deployment of the modern term 'betyl' obscures the original name and its significance as it appears in at least some of the evidence.

The problem of incongruence between modern classifications and their concomitant presumptions on the one hand, and the material remains on the other, is further apparent in the assumption that the iconic and aniconic were two visual traditions that were mutually

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[77] 1) inscription n°16 from Wadi Ramm, on the right of a niche of Allat, reading *nṣbt 'lt 'lht*, 'the *nṣbt*' of Allat the goddess'; 2) inscription found in Petra, at the path to Jabal al-Khubtha, next to an empty niche, reading *'lh nṣyby 'l'z' wmr' byt' 'bd whb'lhy šyr' [b]r zydn*, 'these are the *nṣyby* of Al-'Uzza and the Lord of the House, made by Wahballahi, the caravan-leader, son of Zaidan'; 3) inscription from Qattar ad-Dayr, found by a niche with a carved stele, reading *dnh mṣb' dy bṣr' d[y] ['']bd w[hb'] lhy b[r] […] wh[yy] rb'l mlk nbṭw*, 'this is a *mṣb'* of Bostra, which was made by Wahballahi, son of […], for his own life and the life of Rabb'el, king of the Nabataeans.' Texts and translations adapted from Wenning (2001), p.80-3, who provided a good discussion of each case with further bibliography. See also Healey (2001), p.156, and Patrich (1990a), p.52-9.

[78] This has become the norm in more recent publications. Notably, in *RES* (1907-1914), p.367, n°1088, the inscription from Jabal al-Khubtha, *nṣyby* translated as 'stelae'.

exclusive, and that the choice of one or the other signified two opposing forms. However, the material finds illustrate that these two allegedly antithetical modes of representation were not in binary opposition to one another, but could be and were combined. Within the rich variety of Petra's carved niches, there are not only fully aniconic monuments, but also eye-stelae that are a combination of a rectangular stele and geometric eyes, with or without a nose.[79] These objects, which are typically called 'eye-betyls' or simply 'betyls', combine figural and non-figural forms, and are therefore not purely aniconic. They were found both carved in the rocks and as portable eye-stelae, and they constitute a substantial group of cultic monuments, which coexisted with the fully aniconic.[80] The eye-stelae show that the local indigenous tradition of votive niches and monuments of cult was not confined *a priori* to purely aniconic modes of representation.

The eye-stelae present us with a local artistic tradition which used geometric forms for the rendering of some facial features [PLATE V]. For example, one of the portable stelae has two squares to outline the eyes, with two small circular carvings in them suggesting the pupils. A long thin rectangle denotes a nose between the eyes, and a series of small circular carvings at the top of the stele suggests a hairline or possibly a wreath. In some of these, the allusion to the figural forms is more apparent to the extent that some scholars classified them as *Gesichtsbaetyl*, 'face-betyl', although there is no rendering of the entire face.[81] In others, the eye-stelae have a more geometric character in their style, and are less suggestive of figural features, with examples of eyes resembling stars.[82] Stylistically, the eye-stelae are geometric, one may say schematic, clearly not naturalistic. These monuments deploy the geometric forms to allude to

[79] For a recent survey of the eye-stelae, see Merklein and Wenning (1998). See also Lindner (1988); Patrich (1990a), p.82-6; Savignac (1934), p.587-8, fig.10-1.

[80] According to Wenning (2001), p.83, there are twenty-seven monuments of this type that are documented and published. In addition, there are at least four more that had been found, but were still unpublished at the time of his article. See also Glueck (1965), p.441, pl.199c; Zayadine (1974), p.137-8, pl.LIX.1, LXIII.3.

[81] E.g. an eye-stele carved in Hegra; see Lindner (1988), p.86, pl.2b; Merklein and Wenning (1998), p.76-7.

[82] E.g. the eye-stele in Wadi Ramm, accompanied by an inscription referring to al-'Uzza. See Savignac (1934), p.586-9, pl.9f; Lindner (1988), p.84-5, fig.1; Merklein and Wenning (1998), p.77-8.

the figural elements in a conscious way. In doing so, they create a strong visual effect, for they underscore the contrast between the identifiable figural elements and the basic geometric forms. As such, they cannot be suspected of any kind of Graeco-Roman influence.

Some scholars view these monuments as a kind of concession. According to this approach, although the primary local tradition was purely aniconic, it could not completely refrain from figural forms, and thus admitted a minimal addition of figural features that are only suggested.[83] Indeed, the basic form of the eye-stelae keeps within the local tradition of rectangular carvings. However, the elements that are most noticeable in these eye-stelae are the figural components. The eyes and the nose that are positioned in the middle of the upper part of the rectangular frame create a strong contrast between figural and geometric. This particular style, which uses forms such as circles and squares to denote facial features such as eyes and nose, underscores the figural, and reinforces the iconic effect of these stelae. These are neither proof of the local rejection of figuration in religious art nor testimony to its minimal allowance. The eye-stelae attest the local taste and preference towards the deployment of geometric forms for the rendition of some figural elements, particularly the eyes.

The often-quoted face stele that was found at the temple of the Winged Lions in Petra is another testimony of the local taste for combining the figural and non-figural [PLATE VI].[84] This rectangular stele has almond-shaped eyes that are carved into the flat surface. The eyes are further outlined by a slightly projecting line that appears to be attached to the stele's surface. Other facial features are rendered in a similar way: a single thick line denotes the curved eyebrows that are connected to a long rectangular nose, which is coming down in the middle. At the bottom part of the stele there is a thick-lipped mouth with an incised horizontal line. Above the eyes, a series of carved leaves suggests a wreath, in the middle of which is a hole that probably served for the incision of a stone. The entire face is enclosed within a frame of geometric patterns. The Nabataean

[83] Healey (2001), p.156; Mettinger (1995), p.63; Patrich (1990a), p.86.

[84] Hammond (1980) is the publication of the find of 1975. See also Patrich (1990a), p.84-5. Merklein and Wenning (1998), p.80-1, made the significant observation that the stele was an architectural element, and placed it in the Augustan period.

inscription, *'lht Ḥyn br Nybt*, 'the goddess of Ḥayyan son of Nybt', labels the object as a deity. This stele, with its striking figural features, is yet another example of a local tradition. Here, again, the strong emphasis on the eyes and nose is reminiscent of eye-stelae. In this case, however, the figural components are emphasized by the contrast between the flat surface and the rounded, slightly projecting facial features. Stylistically, the stele is close to the tomb markers uncovered in the Necropolis of Teima in the Arabian peninsula. These stelae have almond-shaped eyes, topped by curved eyebrows that are connected to a long nose.[85] This monument thus belongs to a general local Arabian visual tradition.

The stele from the temple of the Winged Lions disproves another assumption of the aniconic/iconic dichotomy: namely that local gods such as Dushara or al-ʿUzza were originally rendered in aniconic form, while foreign gods that were imports from other cultures, such as Isis or Aphrodite, were primarily rendered in human form and that figural renditions of local deities were an outcome of a type of syncretism or foreign influence. We do not know the supposed identity of this private dedication, the goddess of Ḥayyan son of Nybt, though one may say that it is a type of personal goddess. This deity could have been meant to be al-ʿUzza or Aphrodite, but in either case it does not fit the assumed correlation between the 'ethnic identity of the god' and the form of the monument, whereby the indigenous is aniconic and the foreign is iconic. If the stele was supposed to be a foreign goddess, then it did not fit the supposed style and iconography of imported deities. If it was meant to be a local deity, then according to common assumptions, it should not have had such strong figural elements. In either case, the model and the findings do not match. The main reason for this incongruence is that the prevalent paradigm does not acknowledge the existence of a local tradition of semi-figural monuments.

The limitations of the current approach to the material can be further seen in the case of the deity Dushara. It is often held that the great Nabataean god Dushara had an aniconic form, typically of a

[85] E.g. the inscribed tomb markers in al-Theeb (1993), p.35-41, pl.I-IV; Homès-Fredericq (1980), p.109-10, fig.44. Noted also by Wenning (2001), p.324.

stele.[86] This notion is by and large inspired by the tenth-century text of the *Suda*:[87]

> Θεὺς Ἄρης· τουτέστι θεὸς Ἄρης, ἐν Πέτρᾳ τῆς Ἀραβίας. σέβεται δὲ θεὸς Ἄρης παῤ αὐτοῖς· τόνδε γὰρ μάλιστα τιμῶσι. τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα λίθος ἐστὶ μέλας, τετράγωνος, ἀτύπωτος, ὕψος ποδῶν τεσσάρων, εὖρος δύο· ἀνάκειται δὲ ἐπὶ βάσεως χρυσηλάτου. τούτῳ θύουσι καὶ τὸ αἷμα τῶν ἱερείων προχέουσι· καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν αὐτοῖς ἡ σπονδή. ὁ δὲ οἶκος ἅπας ἐστὶ πολύχρυσος, καὶ ἀναθήματα πολλά.
>
> Theus Ares [i.e. Dusares], that is the god (theos) Ares, in Petra in Arabia. The god Ares is revered amongst them; for this one they especially honor. The statue is a black stone, square in shape, unchiseled, four feet tall, two wide: it is mounted on a plinth of beaten gold. To this [deity] they pour forth the blood of the sacrificial animals on this; and this is their libation. And the whole house is rich in gold, and [contains] many votive offerings.

Following this description, it has been a common assumption that the stelae carved in the niches of Petra were renditions of Dushara.[88] Indeed, one cannot exclude the possibility that this testimony reflects some finds from Petra, where some carvings of rectangular stelae may have been associated with Dushara.[89] However, the inscriptions that associate stelae with other gods disprove this notion and show that there is no strict correlation between the form of the

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[86] Healey (2001), p.96-7.

[87] Entry θ 302. Text adapted from Adler (1928-38), II, p.713. Translation adapted from the entry in the Suidae on-line, which was modified by R. Scaife and D. Whitehead.

[88] A common term in scholarship has been a 'Dushara block' for a rectangular stele, e.g. Hammond (1968). However, more recent works have abandoned this phrase.

[89] The main problem is the question of association between inscription and the carved niches. In triclinium n°17 of the Bab-as Siq, probably the oldest dated Nabataean inscription at Petra, which was dedicated to Dushara, was uncovered. Wenning (2001), p.85-6, revised the earlier interpretations of Merklein (1995) and Dalman (1912), p.40 and p.99-101, of this triclinium, which was dedicated by Aṣlḥ son of Aṣlḥ to Dushara in 96-95 BC. According to Wenning's latest published survey, a carved aedicula with a hemispherical recess and an engraved rectangular stele are the oldest monuments related to Dushara, and not the hemispherical recess itself. Nonetheless, Wenning noted that further study of the many other hemispherical recesses in the room is required in order to draw any final conclusions regarding the relationship between the inscribed dedication to Dushara and the carvings in the room. Another possible case is a niche dedicated to Dushara of Maderasa; see Dalman (1908), p.127, fig.47, idolnische n°89b, with *CIS* II 443.

carved object and the identity of the god.[90] Furthermore, the coinage bearing the name of Dushara from three different originally Nabataean cities shows that the god was associated with different shapes in different localities. The evidence from the coinage further shows that the mode of worship of this god was not uniform in Nabataean cities. The coins of Adra'a, Madaba and Bostra, discussed above, underscore the variety of cultic monuments, which differ in their geometric form. In each locality, the symbol of the cult is different.

Dushara may also have been associated with a semi-iconic form, if indeed an unpublished eye-stele bears the name of Dushara.[91] The coinage from Bostra further illustrates that Dushara's iconography stretched even beyond the boundaries of the semi-figural. Within the sequence of the coins of Bostra, one finds coins with a fully figural bust next to the legend with the name Dushara. In fact, the earliest coin that bears the Nabataean god's name is of the reign of Commodus, ca 177/8 AD [PLATE VII], which has a bust of a beardless male wearing a diadem and fillet, appearing next to the legend ΒΟΣΤΡΗΝΩΝ ΔΟΥΣΑΡΗΣ.[92] Similarly, another coin with a male bust next to the legend ΔΟΥΣΑΡΗΣ ΘΕΟΣ ΒΟΣΤΡΩΝ was issued under the reign of Caracalla [PLATE VIII].[93] The figure is wearing a *paludamentum* and cuirass. His general appearance, particularly his hairstyle, resembles that of the Nabataean kings.[94] Interestingly, the image of the cultic monument of the city of Bostra, with the tripartite structure on a raised platform, was issued in the same year,

[90] E.g. the above-quoted inscription from Qattar ad-Dayr, see p.60 with n.77.

[91] Merklein and Wenning (1998). Wenning (2001), p.83, mentioned the discovery of an eye-stele of Dushara. However, on p.85-6, he said that at the time of writing it could not be proven that the mentioned eye-stele is accompanied by a Dushara inscription.

[92] Kindler (1983), p.110, n°18; C.R. Morey, appendix to *PUAES* II.A, part 4 (1919), p.xxxiv, n°13, fig.14; *BMC Arabia*, p.xxxvi, pl.xlix, n°13; Spijkerman (1978), Bostra n°24.

[93] Kindler (1983), p.114, n^{os}29-29a; Spijkerman (1978), Bostra n^{os}37,39.

[94] Already noted by C.R. Morey, appendix to *PUAES* II.A, part 4 (1919), p.xxxi, who provided the explanation to this occurrence in the framework of Eastern traditions: "that the head is also somewhat like that of the king is not surprising, given the Eastern tendency to assimilate royalty to divinity." See also Kindler (1983), p.60. A similar type recurred under Philip 'the Arab', probably of the year AD 244-6, which has also been identified by Kindler (1983), p.121, n°43, as an anthropomorphic image of Dusares, although the legend does not mention the god.

AD 209/10.[95] This image is accompanied by the city's name. As noted above, similar issues from the reign of Elagabalus onwards made the connection between this cultic structure and the cult of Dushara. The coins of Bostra show that an anthropomorphic image of the god coexisted with an image of the central non-figural monument of cult. [96] Both types of coins were issued in the same year under the reign of Caracalla. Thus, Dushara could be worshipped in a particular way, which involved a unique monument, and at the same time he could be imaged in anthropomorphic form, resembling a Nabataean king.[97]

Even a very partial examination of the Nabataean finds demonstrates that Nabataean religious art consisted of a spectrum of forms: the geometric, semi-figural and fully figural. The striking semi-iconic tradition was not a compromise between two opposing poles, it was a local product. The view that the coexistence of the figural and non-figural was a product of the introduction of Graeco-Roman figural

[95] The nature of these peculiar elements has been a source of great debate, to the point that scholars thought that the image is that of a winepress. See Kindler (1983), p.59-60 and p.82.

[96] All of the coins discussed here make the link between the image and the identity of the god in a clear way. It is noteworthy, however, that there are other issues, which have been identified as anthropomorphic images of Dushara, although there is no clear identification of the image on the coin and Dushara. Notably, a coin from Bostra of the reign of Elagabalus of AD 221/2, with an image of a man riding a camel and raising his right hand, is accompanied by a difficult label which possibly reads: θεός ἀνίκητος or its variant. See *BMC Arabia*, p.28, pl.XLIX, nº16; Kindler (1983), p.117, nº34; Drijvers (1988), p.671, nº8.

[97] A similar type of coexistence may be seen in the medallion and block from Petra identified by Hammond (1968), which is composed of an anthropomorphic bust set in a medallion at the top and a rectangular block. This relief may be an image of a deity, whose identity and gender are unclear from the preserved parts. Patrich (1990a), p.106-9, argued that the medallion illustrates "the extent to which the Nabateans adhered to non-figurative representation and how difficult it was for them to deviate and to loosen the bonds of tradition". However, nothing in the composition of this relief supports this assessment. As asserted by Hammond, both parts were created at the same time, and they are both part of the same scheme. The composition that sets the medallion above the stele emphasizes the figural component, with the bust and flowing hair in the centre. The relationship here between the stele and the anthropomorphic image can be understood in a different way, with the stele not necessarily being the 'aniconic image of the god', but rather a dedication to the deity above. The non-figural monuments with figural imagery were set side by side, one on top of the other, by clear choice. There is no evidence that would suggest this was a product of some consent to the influences of foreign cultures.

art to the indigenous aniconic realm,[98] presumes that there were no local traditions of figural representations of the divine, and that it was thanks to the annexation of the Near East into the great realm of Hellenistic and Roman cultures that local gods assumed figural forms. However, the stele of Ḥayyan son of Nybt shows that, on the contrary, the anthropomorphic image of a deity was not completely rejected locally. If that had indeed been the case, such a monument, emphasizing particular figural features, would not have survived. This stele, which is part of a general local tradition, is an example of the indigenous approach to figural elements, which was distinct from the one of the Graeco-Roman realm. Furthermore, Nabataean religious art included a wide range of figural statuary, which I did not treat here due to the limitations of space.[99] Nonetheless, the apparent Hellenistic influences in this material need not be a reason to view figuration in Nabataean religious art solely as the result of the Graeco-Roman effect and to overlook local figural traditions and other sources of influence such as Egypt. The remains of Nabataean religious art are far more varied and complex, and are products and expressions of many more factors than the bipolar paradigm acknowledges.

The Ancient Perception of an Aniconic Near East

The perception of the Nabataeans and the Arabians in general as stone worshippers is not a modern construct; it is already seen in the above-quoted entry from the *Suda*. Although this description does not reflect the variety of cultic monuments associated with the Nabataean god Dushara, it illustrates a general idea of the pagan Arabians in the tenth century AD.[100] This association between Arabians and litholatry is already apparent in the writings of the second century

[98] Healey (2001), p.157.

[99] For some examples of the local artistic tradition of terracotta figurines, see El-Khouri (2002). Note, at p.149-53, the female seated figures, usually identified as goddesses.

[100] No reader could deny that the stone described in the passage is reminiscent of the black stone of Mecca venerated by Moslems. This, in turn, renders this often quoted tenth-century text even more problematic as a source for the reconstruction of pre-Islamic Arabian religions, particularly since its correspondence with the available material evidence from the period is partial at best.

AD on object worship. In his oration on the role of images in cults, Maximus of Tyre (*Or.* 2.8) gives a short survey of the religions of different peoples, amongst them the Arabians: [101]

> Κελτοὶ σέβουσιν μὲν Δία, ἄγαλμα δὲ Διὸς Κελτιὸν ὑψηλὴ δρῦς. Παίονες σέβουσιν μὲν Ἥλιον, ἄγαλμα δὲ Ἡλίου Παιονικὸν δίσκος βραχὺς ὑπὲρ μακροῦ ξύλου. Ἀράβιοι σέβουσι μέν <θεόν>, ὅντινα δὲ οὐκ οἶδα· τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα εἶδον, λίθος ἦν τετράγωνος.
>
> The Celts revere Zeus, and the Celtic image of Zeus is a tall oak. The Paeonians revere the Sun, and the Paeonian image of the Sun is a small disc at the top of a long pole. The Arabians revere a god, but which god I know not; their image, which I have seen, was a square stone.

A similar type of list appears in the writings on idolatry by a contemporary of Maximus of Tyre, the Christian writer Clement of Alexandria (*Prot.* 4.40):[102]

> Εἰ δ' ἔτι πρὸς τούτοις φέρων ὑμῖν τὰ ἀγάλματα αὐτὰ ἐπισκοπεῖν παραθείην, ἐπιόντες ὡς ἀληθῶς λῆρον εὑρήσετε τὴν συνήθειαν, ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀναίσθητα προ<σ>τρεπόμενοι. Πάλαι μὲν οὖν οἱ Σκύθαι τὸν ἀκινάκην, οἱ Ἄραβες τὸν λίθον, οἱ Πέρσαι τὸν ποταμὸν προσεκύνουν.
>
> If in addition to this, I bring the statues themselves and place them by your side for inspection, you will find on going through them that custom is truly nonsense, when it leads you to adore senseless things, the works of men's hands. In ancient times, then, the Scythians used to worship the dagger, the Arabians their stone, the Persians their river.

The two passages represent different attitudes towards idolatry. Maximus of Tyre, the student of Platonic ideas, sees cult objects as a bare necessity for most mortals, who cannot dispense with symbols of honours paid to the gods and reminders of the gods' names and reputation.[103] The Christian polemicist, in contrast, rejects divine images, and argues that they are but empty objects. Both make their case by providing a series of examples of object worship from a variety of peoples. The aim of these taxonomies is rhetorical: for Max-

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[101] Text adapted from Trapp (1994), p.19, translation adapted from id. (1997), p.21-2.

[102] Text adapted from Marcovich (1995), p.71, translation adapted from the Loeb edition.

[103] Clearly expressed in *Or.* 2.1; see discussion in Trapp (1997), p.15-7.

imus of Tyre the list proves the ubiquitous nature of object worship, while for Clement of Alexandria it serves his argument on the absurdity and primitive nature of idolatry.[104] In these lists, each group is typified by the particular mode of veneration of the god, and each type of worship is used as representative, as something that characterizes the religion of the group. These taxonomies are not comprehensive accurate reports of cult practices, they are lists of stereotypes.[105] Similar commonplaces appear in the writings of the fourth-century AD Arnobius of Sicca (*Adv. Nat.* 6.11):

> *Ridetis temporibus priscis Persas fluvios coluisse, memorialia ut indicant scripta, informem Arabas lapidem, acinacem Scythiae nationes.*
>
> You laugh because in ancient times the Persians worshipped rivers, as is told in the writings which hand down these things to memory; the Arabians an unshapen stone; the Scythian nations a sabre.

This account reveals familiar stereotypes of cult practices of different groups, which were already apparent in the accounts of the second century AD: the Persians worship the river and the Scythians a type of sword or dagger. By the same token, the Arabians worship their stone. At the time of writing, the age of Diocletian, the landscape of religious life had completely altered since the Second Sophistic. However, the same quarry of typical examples was still available and was used in the early fourth century AD for the rejection of pagan idolatry by this newcomer to Christianity.[106] A variation on the same theme appears in a treatise by the third-century philosopher Porphyry, censurer of Christianity and proponent of vegetarianism. In his *On Abstinence from Living Things* (2.56.6), he describes Arabian cult practices in the town of Doumata:[107]

> καὶ Δουματηνοὶ δὲ τῆς Ἀραβίας κατ᾽ ἔτος ἕκαστον ἔθυον παῖδα, ὃν ὑπὸ βωμὸν ἔθαπτον, ᾧ χρῶνται ὡς ξοάνῳ.
>
> The Doumatenoi of Arabia used to sacrifice a child every year and bury him under the altar, which they used as a sacred image.

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[104] On Maximus of Tyre, see Trapp (1997), p.15-7; on Clement of Alexandria, see Finney (1994), p.43-4.

[105] On aniconic societies as a *topos* in early Christian apologetics, see Finney (1994), p.45-7.

[106] On the historical context for *Adv. Nat.*, probably written in AD 302-5 by the African convert to Christianity, Arnobius of Sicca, see Simmons (1995), p.1-46.

[107] Text adapted from Bouffartigue and Patillon (1979), II, p.6, translation adapted from Clark (2000), p.77.

According to this native of Tyre, in the Arabian heartland further southeast the altar was used or treated as a cult statue. The Arabians of Doumata did not distinguish between the altar, typically a rectangular stone, and the image of god. This description of cult practice that entailed child sacrifice in Doumata appears in the context of an attack on sacrifice and the consumption of meat. The annual child sacrifice at Doumata is one example of such practices, which include the Carthaginians of Libya, or the Greeks before setting out to war. These examples are used by Porphyry to show that in ancient times people sacrificed people, and these examples are part of his larger rhetorical scheme.[108] As in previous cases, the descriptions of cult practices of a variety of ethnic groups are overtly used in order to rhetorically support a general argument. This passage is yet another illustration of the image of Arabians as stone worshippers. For, contrary to the other writers who describe Arabian litholatry, Porphyry's subject is neither idolatry nor stone worship, it is sacrifice. However, part of the picture of Arabian child sacrifice at Doumata, which Porphyry presents, includes the notion of stone worship although it is not necessary for his general argument. According to Porphyry, the Arabians of Doumata use the altar in the same manner as a cult statue, implying that the Arabians replace the image of the god with a non-figural stone platform. What we have here is a more elaborate concrete description of Arabian cult practice than the ones encountered before.[109]

The repetition of the description of Arabian stone worship, in a variety of writings of different authors, in order to support differing arguments is not a proof of the actual veracity of this notion. First, it is questionable whether all of these writers were genuinely familiar with the actualities of Arabian worship[110] and, second, even a very limited examination of the finds in the regions that are referred to as Arabian, such as Nabataea or Palmyra, shows that cult practices were far more varied than suggested by these generic descrip-

[108] Clearly stated in *De Abstinentia* 2.53.3-54.1.

[109] Part of this passage is quoted *verbatim* by Bickerman, following his assertion which is quoted at the beginning of this article. See Bickerman (1979), p.70.

[110] As noted by Trapp (1997), p.xii, although Maximus of Tyre claims to have seen the Arabian stone worship, it may as well be part of a rhetorical scheme, for he also claims to have seen Marsyas and the Meander in Phrygia (*Or.* 2.7) and the Dioscuri aiding a ship at sea (*Or.* 9.7).

tions. These passages show that Arabian stone worship was an ancient topos. The precise ethnic identity of the people of Arabia, a loose term in its own right, is ill defined in these contexts and can be seen here as a generic way of referring to those indigenous people of the Near East.[111] This topos was used by writers who were not outsiders to the eastern parts of the empire, North Africa and the Near East. Their descriptions were used to characterize a particular group, the Arabians, who typified the Orient, where the authors themselves lived. At this point, this notion of Arabian stone worship was not imposed from a Western perspective, but it was part of the common culture of the day. It served a purpose of distinguishing ethnic groups through their modes of worship.

Even scholars who acknowledge the problematic nature of these descriptions as accurate accounts of the religions of the peoples of the Near East would still take them as some kind of indicator about the true nature of the religions of the peoples of the region.[112] However, these descriptions are far more useful as testimonia for common notions that were current in the second and fourth centuries AD rather than as evidence for the genuine character of cult practices in the Near East. These stereotypes show that in this period, litholatry was perceived as typical of the cults of the Near East. The stone as a monument of cult had the force of professing Near Eastern identity.[113] This further suggests that cases of clear evidence for Near Eastern stone worship need to be considered as cultic choices in their own right, and not merely as examples of the Semitic default mode of cult practice.

The discourses of the Late Roman empire, Late Antiquity and the Byzantine period on cult practices in general, and monuments of cult

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[111] On the loose usage of the term Arabia and Arabs see Millar (1993) p.512-3: "Nabataeans, the inhabitants of Trachonitis, Ituraeans, as well as Osrhoenians or other inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and also the people of Hatra might on occasion be described by other people as 'Arabs'; so might the unsettled inhabitants of the eastern desert of Egypt, between the Nile and the Red Sea, an area which could also be called Arabia. The use of this or other terms was a matter of choice, or of shifting fashion." See now Macdonald (2003).

[112] E.g. Healey (2001), p.186-7.

[113] One famous stone which cannot be ignored in this context is the black stone of the Syrian emperor Elagabalus of Emesa, described by Herodian (5.3.2-5). This stone, which was brought into the capital, appears from AD 219-22 on coins of this emperor, carried in a triumphal chariot. E.g. *BMC Roman Empire* V, p.560, nº197. See also Millar (1993), p.303-9.

in particular, have shaped modern visions of the religious life of the Roman Near East. They have also dictated much of the interpretation and understanding of the material finds. In Antiquity, these perceptions and representations had a particular purpose: they were instrumental for identifying and prescribing social and ethnic groups and, generally, for distinguishing between East and West. As such, these were not imposed from the centre on the Orient, but were part of a common culture, which developed at that time in the eastern parts of the empire. Given the significance and force of these ideologies, it is time to separate between perceptions, and to differentiate them from realities of cult. In doing so, we modern Westerners should gain a better understanding of religious practices and their ideological significances in the Roman Near East.

SANCTUARIES AND VILLAGES ON MT HERMON DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD

JULIEN ALIQUOT

Introduction

The area called 'Lebanon' in Antiquity did not only include Mt Lebanon, that is the range in the hinterland of the Phoenician coastal cities, but also the parallel range of the Antilebanon with its southern extension, Jabal esh-Sheikh or Mt Hermon.[1] Since archaeological work began in this region of the Near East, great progress has been reported. Of the ca one hundred cult sites, five have been studied (Har Senaim) or are still under investigation ('Ayn Qaniya, Chhîm, Mnin, Yanouh).[2] Excavations and intensive surveys have already changed previous perceptions of settlement patterns on the mountain, while revealing various forms of cultic continuity from the Hellenistic up to the Roman period.

As early as 1939, in his review article on D. Krencker and W. Zschietzschmann's invaluable *Römische Tempel in Syrien*, H. Seyrig stressed the need for a historical study of Lebanon's religious life. As he rightly pointed out, the many temples which the German architects had meticulously described might well be "the clue to an important social and economic change that [would] deserve to be one day the focus of a study."[3] So far his advice has gone unheeded. Up to now, scholars have dealt either with the architecture of the temples

[1] I wish to thank T. Kaizer for inviting me to present this paper at the Corpus Christi Classical Seminar on 11 February 2004. Many thanks are also due to P.-L. Gatier, B. Guyard, C. Rabier, M. Sartre and J.-B. Yon for commenting on earlier drafts of my work. Of course, none of them is responsible for any of the views expressed here.

[2] Waliszewski (1999), Ortali-Tarazi and Waliszweski (2002a) and (2002b), with the reports in *PAM* 8-14 (1997-2003), for Chhîm on Mt Lebanon; Gatier e.a. (2001) and (2002), for Yanouh and the Nahr Ibrahim valley; Omeri (forthcoming), for 'Ayn Qaniya (Mt Hermon) and Mnin (Qalamoun); Dar (1988) and (1993), for Har Senaim and the southern part of Mt Hermon. See also the copiously illustrated book by Nordiguian (2005).

[3] Seyrig (1939), p.441.

for which Lebanon is universally renowned, or with the epigraphic and literary sources. Some of them have further admitted that the creation of the sacred landscape was influenced not only by the natural conditions of the mountain, but also, and above all, by its historical and social context: that is certainly what G. Taylor and M. Tallon meant, when the former saw "the hand of a single master builder" behind the religious architecture,[4] or when the latter put forward the "Roman peace" to account for the high concentration of cult sites in Lebanon.[5] Generally speaking, previous interpretations rightly contextualized the religious building, but they failed to explain why Lebanon was the home of so many sanctuaries during the Roman period. In order to answer this question, I will outline the social dimensions of religious life on a local scale, by dealing with the sanctuaries and villages on Mt Hermon during the Roman period. The wealth of antiquities on Mt Hermon (mainly Roman rural shrines, tombs, and ancient settlements) has been acknowledged for a long time, and Greek epigraphy provides a great deal of information about the local cults.[6] In addition, I will also account for the results of two epigraphic survey campaigns which have been carried out on the Lebanese and Syrian sides of the mountain since September 2002.[7] This study will emphasize on three aspects of the local religious life, first by reassessing the documentation available on the pagan sanctuaries that formed the sacred landscape, then by addressing the issue of the cults and the myths of Mt Hermon, and finally by making assumptions about the relationships of the mountain dwellers' communities with their temples.

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[4] Taylor (1971), p.17.

[5] Tallon (1967), p.249.

[6] The celebrated Hellenistic dedication of Tel Dan was written in Greek and Aramaic. See *BÉ* (1977), n°542 (Robert), and Millar (1987), p.132-3. In the city of Paneas, a few texts were written in Latin during the Roman period. See Dar (1993), p.248, for a photograph of a Safaitic inscription that was discovered on the southern slopes of Mt Hermon. However, these are the exceptions that prove the rule: nearly all inscriptions are in Greek and date back to the Roman period.

[7] These campaigns aim at collecting the Hermonian inscriptions as part of the program of the *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (*IGLS*), under the supervision of J.-C. Decourt (MOM-HISOMA, Lyon), with the agreement of the General Directorate of Antiquities of Lebanon, and the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums of Syria. As regards the epigraphic evidence, I have included in the footnotes references to the main publications only, and the reader is referred to the forthcoming corpus for an exhaustive bibliography.

The Sacred Landscape of Mt Hermon

Mt Hermon extends over an area of 50 km from north to south by 30 km from east to west, and reaches its highest point at 2814 m. Tracing the original features of the mountain in the Near East, the French geographers R. Thoumin and É. de Vaumas described it as a real 'pays', that is a natural country of about 1000 sq km, which can be crossed in one day, and whose dwellers share the same lifestyle.[8] In the Old Testament, Mt Hermon was sometimes considered as a natural border of the Land of the Hebrews to the north. At the southern foot of the mountain, Antiochos III gained a decisive victory over the Lagid general Scopas in 200 BC, after which the Seleucids recovered the area for a while. They were soon replaced by the Ituraeans, whose principality at first developed over all Lebanon in the mid-second century BC. After the fall of the Ituraean rulers of Chalcis ad Libanum (Mejdel Aanjar), the southern side of Mt Hermon belonged from time to time to the principalities of the Herodian kings Agrippa I and Agrippa II, until the end of the first century AD, whereas the northwestern and northeastern sides were divided between Sidon and Damascus under the reign of Tiberius, most likely after the Roman empire had annexed the Ituraean tetrarchy of Abilene.[9] Afterwards, three cities shared Mt Hermon among themselves from the end of the first century AD, as the use of the civic eras of Sidon to the west, Damascus to the east, and Paneas to the south implies. The Acts of the Christian councils and the epigraphic evidence show that, in the Early Byzantine period, the border between the two provinces of Phoenicia ran between

[8] On Mt Hermon as a geographical 'pays' in the beginning of the twentieth century, see the thesis of Thoumin (1936), esp. p.261-71. Vaumas (1954), p.316-7, only touched on the natural features of the Hermonian environment in his *Étude de géographie physique*, his approach being that of P. Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918), founder of the French school of geography, who principally considered the 'régions' and the 'pays' as natural divisions of space. Brunet (1993), p.371-3, discussed the antiquated notion of 'pays', which could probably account for the set-up of the peasant communities who lived in the Near Eastern villages during the Roman period. See Tate (1997) for an attempt at a regionalization of the Syrian countryside in the Roman empire, and Gatier (2005) for an assessment of recent research on the Early Byzantine villages.

[9] I have offered a detailed account of Lebanon's history under the client kings in Aliquot (1999-2003).

Rakhle and Burqush northwards, and east of Paneas' territory southwards.

The presence of many rural temples on both sides of the mountain has been acknowledged for a long time. In the nineteenth century, European travellers either followed the eastern road, leading from Banias to Damascus, or took the western road, from Wadi et-Taim to Hasbaya, Rachaiya, and the Lebanese Beqâ' valley. Along the way, they were able to tour the Hermonian temples. A similar approach to the sacred landscape was still that by G. Taylor in the sixties and in the beginning of the seventies: even though this Professor at the American University of Beirut published pictures of some previously unknown Roman temples, he acknowledged that his *Pictorial Guide* entitled *The Roman Temples of Lebanon* was "a book by an amateur, for the amateur."[10] The evidence gleaned by the travellers remains precious today, especially with regard to religious buildings which disappeared long ago.[11] Nevertheless, even though D. Krencker and W. Zschietzschmann dealt in detail with ten cult sites,[12] the lack of a comprehensive architectural and historical study is still to be deplored.

The epigraphic survey campaigns of 2002 and 2003 allowed to update the corpus of the Hermonian sanctuaries [PLATE IX]. The southern part of the mountain, north of Banias, was not included in the surveyed area. However, recent publications, such as Sh. Dar's book *Settlements and Cult Sites on Mount Hermon* (1993), partly filled this want. The campaigns led to the identification of four new or neglected cult sites: 'Ayn Aata in Lebanon,[13] 'Ayn Qaniya near the Syrian checkpoint of Jdeidet Yabous, Korsei el-Debb near Kafr

[10] Taylor (1971), for the temples of Bakka, Haloua, Mdoukha, Qalaat al-Amoud and Yanta, all of them located in present-day Lebanon. See also the article by Tallon (1967), especially for the information on the paths on the mountain.

[11] E.g. Saulcy (1853), II, p.564-8, with the sketches of his pl.50, for the temple of Kafr Hawar, which has been merged into modern houses. Saulcy wrongly took the white limestone of Kafr Hawar's temple for marble. In October 2003, I noticed that there was no trace of marble among the last remnants of the temple, the ashlars of which probably came from an ancient open cast quarry south of the modern village.

[12] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.205-69 and pl.83-116: el-Aaqbe (Akraba), 'Ayn Horche, Bakka, Deir el-Aachaiyer, el-Habbariye, Libbaya and Nebi Safa within the Lebanese territory; Burqush, Hine and Rakhle within the Syrian territory.

[13] Mouterde (1951-2), p.26-7, for the lintel of the unpublished temple.

Hawar, and Qasr Chbib above Arne.[14] The corpus includes at least twenty-five cult sites spread over 1500 sq km, including the four places already cited and the two sanctuaries of Har Senaim and Qalaat Bustra, which have been studied by Israeli archaeologists.[15] I will not discuss here the nature of all antiquities discovered on the mountain, nor forget the results of a recent reassessment of the sacred landscape of northern Syria: in 1999, O. Callot and P.-L. Gatier showed that many identifications were dubious, as scholars have sometimes mistaken funerary buildings for temples. Since Roman monumental tombs can also be found on Mt Hermon, as in Saidnaya (Antilebanon), the identification of temples on the five sites of Haouch Hafoufa, Mazraat el-Faqaa, Qalaat al-Amoud, Qatana and Kafr Dura remains questionable, or at least requires further investigation.[16]

Such a number of Roman sanctuaries at high altitude, most of them surrounded by tombs and often connected with ancient settlements, shows that Mt Hermon was continuously inhabited during the first three centuries AD. The cult sites are seemingly concentrated in the northern part of the mountain. Yet their geographical distribution is quite homogeneous, and contrasts with that of sanctuaries on Mt Lebanon and northern Antilebanon, which was less regular. The difference with the territory of Antioch in northern Syria is also noteworthy: while at present the archaeological remains are much more numerous there, the number of Roman cult sites (twelve against twenty-five) is smaller in the Antiochene than on Mt Hermon.

Krencker and Zschietzschmann were the first to emphasize the peculiarities of religious architecture on Mt Hermon. The recent survey confirmed the broad outlines of their conclusions. On the one hand, the general characteristics of the Hermonian temples may be described negatively: their plan was not prostyle and their outside order was not Corinthian.[17] On the other hand, a single opening, instead of a triple door, gave access to the cella, contrary to what can

[14] Omeri (forthcoming), for 'Ayn Qaniya, Korsei el-Debb and Qasr Chbib.

[15] Dar (1993), p.28-92 (Har Senaim), and p.93-103 (Qalaat Bustra).

[16] Taylor (1971), p.150, pl.157-8 (Haouch Hafoufa), and p.155, pl.163-4 (Qalaat al-Amoud); Dar (1993), p.107-9 (Kafr Dura). The archaeological remains of Mazraat el-Faqaa are not published. The temple of Qatana was only acknowledged by Kremer (1853), p.173-4, without any sketch.

[17] With the exception of the front door in the small apsidal temple of Burqush, see Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), pl.101. In Bakka, I have seen an isolated

be found in several temples of the Beqâ‘ valley and Mt Lebanon (from Hosn Sfire to Kadesh). This characteristic left space on the front wall for ornamentation, especially niches or simple recesses.[18] The inner system of stairs leading onto the adyton was quite remarkable in a few temples,[19] whereas the structure of the adyton and the size of the crypts underneath show similarities with the architecture of the Hauran.

The results of the survey stressed an underestimated aspect of the sanctuaries: following the examples of the small apsidal temple of Rakhle and the shrine of Har Senaim, they were very often hollowed out of the rock. A monumental rock-cut altar has been spotted in Korsei el-Debb, and the two sanctuaries of Qasr Chbib had their northern wall completely carved out of the rock scarp; in the western sanctuary, the temple was also hewn in its back part, in the place of the adyton. This kind of architecture compares well with that of mountainous sanctuaries on Mt Lebanon and Antilebanon,[20] and that of the Panion, in front of the natural grotto and the rock scarp of Banias.[21] Moreover, all this echoes Strabo's assertions (*Geogr.* 16.2.18-20 (755-756)) about the lifestyle of the 'Arab and Ituraean' mountain dwellers who are said to have settled there since the middle of the second century BC. But that is not to say that all sanctuaries necessarily went back to the Hellenistic period.

Corinthian capital, which could be related to the temple which was briefly studied by Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.175, and Taylor (1971), p.79.

[18] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.208 (Nebi Safa), p.216-8 fig.324-5 and 327 (el-Habbariye), p.252 fig.107 and 109 ('Ayn Horche), p.261 fig.403 (Deir el-Aachaiyer); Omeri (forthcoming) for 'Ayn Qaniya and Qasr Chbib. An inscription of Rakhle reminds of the building of two niches in the temple of Leucothea 'at the own expense of the goddess, and under the supervision of the priest Theudas'. See Clermont-Ganneau (1898), p.100-1.

[19] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), pl.86 (Nebi Safa), pl.89-90 (el-Habbariye) and maybe pl.100 (Burqush).

[20] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.40-6, for the great sanctuary of Qalaat Faqra on Mt Lebanon; Omeri (forthcoming) for Mnin in Qalamoun.

[21] Ma'oz (1994-9), p.90-5 and p.100 (archaeological remains and coins). See also Wilson (2004). According to a dedicatory inscription of Paneas, engraved above the arch of a niche hollowed out in the rock scarp, 'Valerius -panos priest of the god Pan (consecrated a statue of) the Lady Nemesis and her temple which was completed by cutting away the rock underneath'. Waddington (1870), n°1893; Brünnow (1898), p.87 n°7; Brünnow and Domaszewski (1905), p.249 *b*, ll.3-5: Οὐαλέριος [– –]ΠΑΝΟΣ, ἱερεὺς θεοῦ Πανός, τὴν / Κυρίαν Νέμεσιν καὶ τὸν σὺν τῇ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ κοιλαν/θείσῃ πέτρᾳ τελεσιουργη[θέ]ντα ναὸν αὐτῆς.

Precise dating of the Hermonian sanctuaries is, at present, impossible. In 1938, Krencker and Zschietzschmann argued that all temples dated back to the Roman period. More specifically, the German architects were inclined to think that most of them had been built between the second half of the second century and the end of the third century AD, with very few exceptions.[22] It is indeed worth observing that the techniques which were used in their construction differ from those most recently encountered by archaeologists in some Phoenician shrines and buildings from the Achaemenid and Hellenistic periods (Tyre, Kharayeb, Tel Anafa). They also differ from the Hellenistic architecture of the Hauran and the Jawlan, according to recent reports on the sites of Khirbet Massakeb and Khirbet Zemel.[23] Nevertheless, Krencker and Zschietzschmann further recognized that the religious architecture of Mt Hermon and Antilebanon differed much more from Graeco-Roman standards than that of Mt Lebanon and Beqâ‘ valley, which makes the use of their dating criteria quite problematic. On this point, the epigraphic evidence provides complementary information about various stages of religious construction and cultic activity from the late first century AD up to the early fourth: the temple of Aaiha was completed in AD 92;[24] at Segeira, building activities in Leucothea's sanctuary occurred between AD 103 and 116;[25] at Hine, the enclosure wall of the sanctuary was built during the governorship of Pertinax in Syria, between AD 179 and 182;[26] at Qasr Hammara, the village community of Ainkania bore the costs of a religious building after AD 212;[27] in Arne, the temple of Zeus was refurbished in AD 329 or 330.[28] With regard to Deir el-Aachaiyer and Kfar Qouq, cultic activities were performed there in AD 132 and 206 respectively.[29]

[22] Namely the two temples of Khirbet el-Knisse, the temple of Bakka and the small apsidal temple of Burqush, which were presumably built during the first century AD, according to Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.296.

[23] See Kalos (1999) for the Hellenistic sanctuary of Khirbet Massakeb; Hartal (2002) on Khirbet Zemel.

[24] Mouterde (1951-2), p.33-5 n°4.

[25] Aliquot (2002).

[26] Fossey (1897), p.62 n°70; Mouterde (1959), pl.XI (copy of O. Puchstein).

[27] Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.304-9.

[28] Fossey (1897), p.63-4 n°73; Mouterde (1959), p.83-4 n°20.

[29] Jalabert (1907), p.278-80 (Deir el-Aachaiyer); Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.300 n.47 (Kfar Qouq): I read 'year 306' (i.e. AD 206) instead of 'year 390' (Ghadban).

A sanctuary of Leucothea operated in Rakhla from at least AD 60 up to 294, and continued to be improved and restored until the end of the third century.[30] Thus, all dated inscriptions tend to confirm that the known Hermonian sanctuaries were built and refurbished between the end of the first century AD and the beginning of the fourth century AD.

Consequently, it is not unlikely that permanent religious buildings stood on the mountain during the Hellenistic period, as at Chhîm and Yanouh on Mt Lebanon, but it still has to be proved as regards Mt Hermon. Even in Banias, the Panion was built during the Roman period, although Pan was already worshipped in the holy grotto during the Hellenistic period.[31] The only rural sanctuary which was certainly built before the Roman period in the area was that of Tel Dan, an heir to an Iron Age and Hellenistic cult place crowning a mound in the Lake Hule depression. There, excavations have shown that important building activities took place in the sacred precinct during the Roman period, going so far as to change the enclosure orientation from south-north to west-east.[32] The fact that, in Late Antiquity, Dan was mistakenly believed to be Paneas, suggests that the venerable sanctuary of Tel Dan had lost its fame for a long time,[33] whereas a new town had been founded and had grown below the formerly modest Panion. Assuming that Tel Dan's precinct was still used as a cult place until the abandonment of the site in the fourth century AD, its refurbishment serves as a reminder that cultic continuity could go along with major ruptures in the ritual.[34] In any case, on Mt Hermon the currently visible sanctuaries are

[30] E.g. Sartre (1993a), p.55-7 n°4, and Jalabert (1907), p.273 n°67. Contrary to Di Segni (1997), I think that the era in use at Rakhle during the Roman period has always been that of Sidon. For the starting point of the Sidonian era during the Roman period (first January 110 BC), see now Kiourtzian (2002), and Gatier, *AÉ* (2002), 1528.

[31] Berlin (1999).

[32] Biran (1994), p.159-232, esp. p.228-31.

[33] See, among various references, Jer., *Hebr. quaest. in libro Gen.*, glossing *Gen.* 14:4, ed. P. de Lagarde, *CCSL* 72 (1959), p.19. A similar confusion appeared in the Talmudic tradition. Cf. Abel (1933-8), I, p.490, and Wilson (2004), p.77-8.

[34] Although dealing with Greece from the Bronze Age up to the Archaic period, Polignac (1994) and (1995), and Schnapp-Gourbeillon (2002), brought up the problem of cultic continuity in terms which have proved to be relevant for other areas and periods of the ancient world, as far as the emergence of the city is concerned. See for instance Van Andringa (2002) on Roman Gaul.

Roman, as they were in all Lebanon, until excavations revealed a Hellenistic stage of religious building.

A new set of sanctuaries thus covered Mt Hermon during the Roman period. Some of them may have had forerunners, but it is of the utmost importance to stress that all were seemingly built under Roman rule, and that they shared then features which reflected the originality of local religious architecture and its belonging to broader areas. The study of the Hermonian cults and myths will also lead to contrast local particularism with regional traditions.

Hermonian Cults and Myths

The cults worshipped in the Hermonian sanctuaries are imperfectly known: first, in most cases there is insufficient evidence to come to any proper conclusion; second, the gods remained anonymous as frequently on Mt Hermon as in all Syria. Therefore, only a few temples can be attributed to a particular divinity (Atargatis at Kafr Hawar, Leucothea at Rakhle, Zeus at 'Ayn Horche, Arne, and 'Ayn Qaniya, but only a great anonymous god at Har Senaim). Written sources do not merely point out the sanctuaries' divine owners, however. They also provide additional information for the study of local pantheons and myths.

'Hermon' was one of the Jabal esh-Sheikh's names in the Old Testament. Its etymology suggests that the mountain was regarded as holy: indeed, the semantic field to which 'Hermon' belonged covered the notions of 'forbidden' and 'sacred'.[35] Mythological traditions further confirmed the holiness of Mt Hermon, which therefore ranked among the Near Eastern sacred mountains, such as the Kasios, Lebanon or Antilebanon, that Philo of Byblos' *Phoenician History* still held holy.[36] Later on, Eusebius of Caesarea stated in his

[35] Richardson (1994-2000), 1, p.354-5.

[36] Philo of Byblos in *FGrH* 790, fr.2 (Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 1.10.9). The mountain was invoked beside other holy ranges in several treaties since the second millennium BC. According to Lipiński (1971), p.15-41, the most ancient textual evidence for its holiness is the Old Babylonian version of the *Gilgamesh Epic*, if one accepts to identify Mt Hermon with the cedar forest that was under the protection of the giant Humbaba. Yet Mt Hermon had (and still has) no cedar, and other identifications have been proposed.

Onomasticon that the pagans still considered Mt Hermon as a holy place at the turning point of the fourth century AD.

In Antiquity, Jerome (*Onom.*, *s.v.* Aermon) already hinted at the major sanctuary that crowned the summit of the mountain, at the place today called in Arabic 'Qasr Antar'. From this high place, a supreme divinity seemingly ruled over Mt Hermon. Against the enclosure wall of the temple, Ch. Warren discovered in 1869 a Greek inscription, today kept in the British Museum.[37] The text was engraved on a stele of grey limestone (107 x 51 x 14 cm) that was broken into two pieces and cut in the back during its removal. On the stone, the eight lines of rough letters (4.5-10 cm) have been painted in red according to F.H. Marshall's erroneous facsimile, which distorts the reading of the inscription, if one confines to the current photograph [PLATE X-XI]. I reproduce here the transcription of Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, who was the first and last editor to publish the text correctly:

Κατὰ κέ/λευσιν / θεοῦ με/γίστου κὲ / ἁγίου ὑ ὀμνύον/τες ἐντεῦ/θεν.

L.4-5: κ(αὶ) / ἁγίου or κ[αὶ] / ἁγίου (Clermont-Ganneau) ; Β[ο/β]ατίου (Marshall).
L.6: Υ for οἱ (Clermont-Ganneau); [ο]ὐ (Marshall).

The text recalls the divine order given by 'the greatest and holy god', whom Clermont-Ganneau recognized as the biblical Baal-Hermon (*Jg.* 3:3; *1 Ch.* 5:23) under a Hellenized name. Although laconic, the end of the inscription mentions a religious community of 'those on oath' (οἱ ὀμνύοντες); eventually, the adverb ἐντεῦθεν, 'from here', seems to forbid the faithful who had not taken the ritual oath trespassing the sacred area beyond the place where the stone was on display. The oath echoes Iamblichus' hint (*VP* 15) at the restricted access to another holy mountain, Mt Carmel. Above all, the ritual order fits very well with the ancient traditions that characterized Mt Hermon as the mountain of oath. The Jewish pseudepigraphic *Book of Enoch* seems to be of great significance on this point. Of particular

[37] Warren (1870b), p.328, facsimile of an uncompleted copy; Clermont-Ganneau (1903a), with photograph, fig.4 = id. (1903b), p.350, pl.VIII; Marshall (1916), p.185 n°1051. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. P. Higgs (Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum) for allowing me to see the inscription and photograph the stone (reg. no.1903. 4-22. 1) on 13 February 2004.

relevance is its first section, the *Book of Watchers*, whose main topic is the angels' fall and punishment. According to the Aramaic Enochic fragments from Qumran, the angels had sworn on the cursed mountain, and one of them was called '(the one) of Hermon' (*Hermonî*):[38]

> [And they answered], all of them, and said to him: "Let us [all] swear [an oath and all bind one another that we shall not] any of us turn aside from this counsel [until we do this deed." Then] they all [swore] together and bound [one another] by imprecations. [And they were all of these two hundred who came down] in the days of Jared on [the summit of Mt] Hermon; [and they called the mount Hermon] because they swore and bound [one another] by imprecations upon it. And these are [the names of their leaders]: [… *Hermonî*], eleventh to him […]. These are the chiefs of the chiefs of tens. Those (two hundred) and their leaders [all took for themselves] wives from all that they chose; and [they began to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them] and (they began) to teach them sorcery and [spell-binding, and the cutting of the roots; and they showed them herbs]. And they became pregnant by them and bare [giants three cubits high who] were born (and multiplied) on the earth [according to the kind of their childhood, and growing up according to the kind of their adolescence, and they were devouring] the labour of all the sons of men and [men] were unable [to supply them. But the giants] conspired to slay men, and [to devour them. And they began to sin and to…] against all birds and beasts of the earth, [and reptiles which creep upon the earth and (creatures) in the waters], and in the heaven, and the fish of the sea, and to devour the flesh [of one another, and they were drinking blood. Then the earth made the accusation against] the wicked, [concerning everything which was done upon it].

In the Christian tradition as in later Enochic literature, Mt Hermon still was cursed because of the angels' fall.[39] Even if there is a long

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[38] *Enoch* 6:4-7:6 (cf. 69:2), ed. Milik (1976), p.150-1, Aramaic text and English translation.

[39] Hilary of Poitiers (ca AD 315-366), in his commentary on *Ps.* 132:3 (*PL* 9 [1844], col.748-9): *Hermon autem mons est in Phoenice cuius interpretatio anathema est: quod enim nobiscum anathema nuncupatur, id hebraice Hermon dicitur. Fertur autem id, de quo etiam nescio cuius liber exstat, quod angeli concupiscentes filias hominum, cum de caelo descenderent, in hunc montem maxime excelsum conuenerint. […] Certe hodie gentes montem hunc profana religione uenerantur: et interpretationem nominis sui, quod est anathema, ipsa illa impiae superstitionis sede testantur.* In the words of Jerome, also dealing with *Ps.* 132:3, ed. G. Morin, *CCSL* 78 (1958), p.280-1: *Legimus quendam librum apocryphum, eo tempore quo descendebant filii Dei ad filias hominum, descendisse illos in montem Ermon, et ibi inisse pactum quomodo uenirent ad*

chronological gap between the *Book of Watchers* and its latest adaptations and translations, J.T. Milik, who edited the Aramaic fragments of scrolls from Cave four at Qumran, considered that "from the first half of the second century BC onwards the *Book of Watchers* had essentially the same form as that in which it is known through the Greek and Ethiopic versions."[40] However, the tradition does not prove that a ritual was performed on the summit of Mt Hermon in early times. It only kept memory of its holiness alive. As for the remains of the high place, they date from the Roman period, like the other Hermonian temples. Moreover, the inscription and other small findings, such as the coins today kept in the Museum of Quneitra, make it unlikely that the building of the high place and the setup of its cult went back to the Hellenistic period.[41] If so, the cult did not leave any textual and material evidence at all.

The major cult of Qasr Antar raises another issue: that of the identity of the many Hellenized lords who were worshipped under the names of 'Zeus' or 'the great god' or 'the holy god' on both sides of the mountain. According to many scholars, from Ch. Clermont-Ganneau to Y. Hajjar, they are likely to be undifferentiated expressions of the unchanging biblical Baal-Hermon.[42] Several denominations, however, also show the faithful's wish to individualize locally each expression of the great god: after the 'god who is in Dan' during the Hellenistic period, Zeus of Ainkania, Zeus of Ornea, and (maybe) Durahlun of Rakhla were separately worshipped in the villages.[43] Thus, the devotion for local divinities interpreted as aspects

filias hominum, et sibi eas sociarent. […] Ermon in lingua nostra interpretatur ἀνάθημα, *hoc est condemnatio*. Cf. id. *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, ed. G. Morin, *CCSL* 72 (1959), p.240. The same interpretation appears again in later lexica. About the seventh century AD, the Jewish communities of Mesopotamia were aware of the Enochic themes, and especially that of Mt Hermon's curse. See Milik (1976), p.215 and p.335-6.

[40] Milik (1976), p.25.

[41] Ehrl (1990), p.125-32. An Austrian archaeological team has undertaken to complete the study of Qasr Antar in the nineties. See Ruprechtsberger (1992a), (1992b), (1994) and (1996).

[42] Clermont-Ganneau (1903b); Hajjar (1990), p.2537-41.

[43] Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.304-9 (Zeus of Ainkania). Fossey (1897), p.63-4 n°73; Mouterde (1959), p.83-4 n°20 (Zeus of Ornea). Durahlun, whose name would mean 'the one from Rakhla', is mentioned in Palmyrenean Aramaic epigraphy. His identity is still the subject of controversy between scholars who consider Durahlun as an aspect of Baalshamin and those who are inclined to tell them apart. See Kaizer (2002a), p.84, with bibliography. Local documentation currently shows that Rakhla's great deity was Leucothea.

of Zeus was as important, if not even more so, as the invocation of the supreme lord on the holy mountain.

From now on, the study of local religious life has to be complemented by information which corrects the idea that Mt Hermon was an isolated area within the Roman Near East. The Hermonian traditions fully fit into the Hellenized mythological geography of Roman Syria. Up to the latest quotations of the Enochic writings, the mountain was described as a country of giants. Jewish and Christian legends touched on it as the place where the fallen angels had given birth to giants, whereas the Euhemerist Philo of Byblos told of four mortal giants who united with women, and who ruled over the mountains to which they had given their names. A.I. Baumgarten has rightly reminded that "the two versions must be cristallizations of the same cycle of stories, with each version modifying that cycle to suit its own assumptions and beliefs."[44] The Hermonian environment was further celebrated for its legendary wildness. At the headwaters of the Jordan, the Greek god Pan has sometimes been considered as the *interpretatio Graeca* of a native god of the springs, but the lack of evidence prompts me to be cautious.[45] Conversely, it is well known that the Greeks recognized the southern slopes of the mountain as the favourite country of Pan and the Nymphs in Syria. In the second century AD, Pausanias drew a parallel between the Arcadian river Alpheus on the one hand, and the Nile and Jordan on the other hand: their course, he wrote, proved similar, as all three of them now dive into the depths of earth, now suddenly resurface farther on; Pausanias also addressed the issue of their springs, which

[44] Baumgarten (1981), p.157.

[45] In any case, the hypothetical identification of such a god with Baal's son in the Ugaritic poem *Baal and the heifer* must be rejected, against Dussaud (1936), followed by Lipiński (1971), p.16. The text relates to a hunting of Baal on the shore of Shamak 'that abounds with buffalos'. There, the goddess Anat brings a heifer to her brother Baal, who impregnates it before getting back to his throne on the Sapon. After the heifer has given birth to a veal, Anat finally conveys the good news to her brother. Dussaud speculated that the Shamak should be the Lake Semachonitis in Joseph. *AJ* 5.199 and *BJ* 4.2-3, and the Samkô in the Talmud of Jerusalem, *Kilayim* 9.6 (32c). According to Caquot and Sznycer (1974), p.283 n.*l*, it is very likely that the Shamak would be closer to Ras Shamra-Ugarit, in "the area of the Lake al-'Amq northeast of Antioch, or the marshland of the Ghab south of Jisr esh-Shoghur." I am very grateful to M. P. Bordreuil (Collège de France, Paris) for warning me against Dussaud's interpretation, which testifies to the tendance of the early Ugaritology to locate wrongly some of the Ugaritic myths and legends in the same environment as that of the Bible.

the Greeks and the Jews used to discuss seriously.[46] From all this, it may be deduced that the cult of Pan was grafted on the site during the Hellenistic period, when the Greeks interpreted the landscape of the southern slopes of Mt Hermon and the upper Jordan valley as a new Arcadia. The Damascene may be associated with this Syrian Arcadia, according to a recent study about the Greek traditions about Damascus and the river Barada.[47] The cultural and religious references to Arcadia in inland Syria strikingly contrast with the cults of coastal Phoenicia, which were modified by the encounter with Greece and Rome as much as they borrowed from Egypt during the Roman period. Yet, connections between the Hermonian cults and the Phoenician civic pantheons are also to be acknowledged.

The local cult of Qasr Antar might have had influence as far as Sidon, the territory of which included the western side of Mt Hermon. Indeed, a Greek text, that was identically reproduced on two stones formerly reused in the church of Helaliye (near Sidon), mentions the offering of two stone lions to Zeus by Threption, son of Neikon, in AD 147/6. The fact that the dedication was done after a dream (κατ' ὄναρ) reminds of the divine order given by the greatest and holy god from his high place of Qasr Antar. Zeus' divine epithet might be ὅριος, 'of boundaries', rather than ὄρειος, 'of the mountain'.[48] Whatever the solution actually is, both titles may well suit

[46] Paus. 5.7.4-5; Joseph. *AJ* 15.363-4; *BJ* 1.404-6 and 3.509-15. See Abel (1933-8), I, p.474-83. The Rabbinic sources referring to the course of the river parallel the tradition relative to the Orontes, which was identified as a water snake under various names, as Abel (1933) has shown. This compares well with the Jordan, which was told to issue 'from the cavern of Paneas […] and [to pass] through the Lake of Sibkay and the Lake of Tiberias and [to roll] down into the great sea from whence it rolls on until it rushes into the mouth of Leviathan', according to the Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Bathra* 74b, quoted by Meshorer (1984-5), p.37.

[47] P.-L. Gatier, 'Oronte et Barada: fleuves syriens', paper read at the seminar on 'Les fleuves: géographie historique, archéologie et littérature' (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon, 2004). There was also another Syrian Arcadia in the Orontes valley, following the interpretative framework to which Gatier gave prominence then.

[48] The first editor, Renan (1864-74), p.397, followed by Cook (1914-40), II/2, p.868-9 n.8, read Διὶ ὀρείῳ 'to Zeus of the mountain' in the second line, instead of ὀρείῳ (for ὁρίῳ, as the patronymic name Νείκωνος is for Νίκωνος in the first line). Yet the use of ὄρειος ('of/from the mountain' or 'mountain-haunting') would remain quite vague in comparison with the Near Eastern habit of calling the mountainous divinities according to the precise name of the summit over which they ruled. Besides, as regards Zeus, the epithet ὄρειος does not seem to be known in the Hellenized East, although Zeus might be 'any other of the gods of the mountains' (ὅσοι ἄλλοι

the highlander god, who was the guardian of boundaries and landmarks par excellence on the mountainous fringes of the Sidonian territory.

Two other Hermonian deities were worshipped from Phoenicia to the Decapolis and Arabia, Leucothea and Theandrios, whose Greek names supposedly substituted for those of native Syrian gods. The cult of the latter is only evidenced by a unique dedication from Rîme to the 'male god' (θεῷ ἀνδρίῳ) in AD 198/9.[49] This denomination is closer to the literal meaning of the divine name than 'Theandrites' and 'Theandrios', especially testified in the Hauran and on the Jawlan.[50] Many scholars see Theandrios as a typical Arab god.[51] Yet, such a statement comes up against the problems generally associated with using religion as a marker of ethnicity in tracing the Arabs before the sixth century AD.[52] Besides, Theandrios' native denomination is not known. Were it the case, and were the etymology of this name exclusively Arabic, it would be a hazardous criterion for distinguishing the ethnicity of the god or that of his worshippers. At least it is worth noting that the Hermonian cult fitted into a regional religious set including the Hauran and the Jawlan.

The evidence for the worship of Leucothea allows more conclusive assumptions. The Greek sea goddess, whose name reminded of the foam whiteness, was venerated from AD 60 at Rakhle, where she had a temple, and at Segeira under Trajanus, according to an inscription found in 'Ayn al-Burj. Leucothea was also worshipped at Tyre (where she was associated with Heracles), at Kfar Zabad in the Beqâ' valley (together with Jupiter Heliopolitanus), at Inkhil in the Hauran (together with her son Melicertes), at Tel Jezreel near Scythopolis and at Gerasa in the Decapolis. From Phoenicia to Arabia, great native deities like Astarte or Atargatis were probably

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ὄρειοι θεοί) that Arr. *Cyn.* 35.3 placed at Artemis, Apollo, Pan, the Nymphs and Hermes' side. On Zeus ὅριος, see Cook (1914-40), III/2, p.1183, to which should be added the decree honoring the dadouchos Themistokles in Eleusis, dated from 20/19 BC, *SEG* 30 (1980), nº93 l.16 (ἱερεὺς Διὸς ὁρίου καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς ὁρίας).

[49] Mouterde (1959), p.82-3 nº19.

[50] See for example Donceel and Sartre (1997), for the cult of Theandrios in Canatha.

[51] Thus Sourdel (1952) p.78-81, Donceel and Sartre (1997), p.31, and Retsö (2003), p.610.

[52] See the methodological comments by Macdonald (2003), esp. p.307-8.

venerated under the aspect of Leucothea.[53] Though likely, this hypothesis is not enough to explain why such a peculiar divinity was an object of worship on and around Mt Hermon. According to the best-known story that the Greeks used to tell on Leucothea, the goddess originally was Ino, daughter of king Cadmus of Thebes, and second wife of king Athamas, with whom she had two sons, Melicertes and Learchus. Ino concocted a bogus oracle that demanded the death of Phrixus and Helle, but the children by Athamas' first marriage fled on a golden ram, this event announcing the quest of the Argonauts. Later, Athamas killed Learchus, and Ino ran from him carrying Melicertes; they jumped into the sea, where mother and son were transformed into deities under the names of Leucothea and Palaemon. It may be assumed that not only the myth of Ino-Leucothea, but also the whole Boeotian cycle to which it was related, circulated locally and above all in the surrounding cities, as Severan coins of Sidon and Paneas featuring sailors in the ship Argo testify.[54] For Sidon, it may be a means to reaffirm the Greekness of the city, which already considered itself as the metropolis of Thebes during the Hellenistic period; it was also a way to contest the Tyrians' right to monopolize the myths about Cadmus and his family.

The Hermonian cults and myths thus refered to a local tradition that was partly distinct from that of Lebanon as a whole, which strengthens the conclusions based on the architecture and the archaeology of the sanctuaries in the area. Yet, the mountain was not isolated in the religious map of Roman Syria.

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[53] So already Clermont-Ganneau (1898), p.68-9. See Sartre (1993a) for the Syrian dossier on Leucothea, to which should be added the dedication of uncertain provenance *SEG* 44 (1994), n°1326 (maybe from Rakhle) and the inscription of Tel Jezreel, *BÉ* (1998), n°515. Atargatis had a temple on Mt Hermon at Kafr Hawar. Cf. Aliquot (2002), p.244-6.

[54] This issue would deserve a study which I have only outlined here. For the numismatic evidence, see Blatter (1984), n°8 (Sidon), with n°14 (Sidonian glass bottle featuring Jason and the Golden Fleece on a face, and the ship Argo on the other), and Meshorer (1984-5), p.46-7 and pl.15 (Paneas), with further references to the Talmudic literature.

Rural Communities and Their Temples

As in many regions of the Roman Near East, the documentation provides two series of settlements, some revealed by archaeology, others known by the written sources. The former remain anonymous, such as the villages, hamlets, and farmsteads that Sh. Dar has explored on the southern slopes of the mountain.[55] As regards the latter, caution is advised, because the reference to an ancient place name does not in itself mean that the place in question was inhabited in Antiquity. Besides, the uncertainties as to the political status of some well-known agglomerations are likely to hide the changes connected with the development of grouped settlement during the Roman and Early Byzantine periods. For instance, nothing whatsoever is known about Paneas before the time it was established as a city in 2 BC.

Crosschecking of the two series of Hermonian settlements is mostly impossible at present. For example, the quotation of the 'gods of Kiboreia' in an inscription from Deir el-Aachaiyer does not prove per se that 'Kiboreia' was the name of the place nowadays called Deir el-Aachaiyer, even if it was the location of a Roman sanctuary and settlement.[56] Three Roman villages, however, can be identified by their remains and their name, which lived on in modern toponymy: Ainkania ('Ayn Qaniya[57]), Ornea (Arne[58]) and Ina

[55] Dar (1988) and (1993): e.g. Har Senaim (village with sanctuary), Qalaat Bustra (farmstead with sanctuary), Kafr Dura (settlement), Mazraat Beit el-Ratzif (settlement), Bir an-Sobah (village with an oil press), Khirbet el-Hawarit (village with a ceramic workshop), Joubbatta ez-Zeit (isolated farmstead), Majdel Chams (village). Yet, I do not share Dar's opinion about the high dating of the settlements he studied, especially since the majority of the pottery, the coins and the inscriptions collected in this area is Roman and Early Byzantine. Besides, it should be noted that the so-called 'Ituraean pottery' from Mt Hermon mentioned by Dar does not go back before the Roman period, and does not compare with the Hellenistic Golan Ware pithoi, according to Hartal (2002), p.93*. Cf. Aliquot (1999-2003), p.201-5, for the so-called 'Ituraean pottery'. More generally, there is no evidence that Mt Hermon was continuously inhabited during the Hellenistic period.

[56] Jalabert (1907), p.278-80 (inscription); Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.256-64 (sanctuary and other remains), Taylor (1971), p.86-9 pl.72-5, and Dentzer-Feydy (1999), p.531-2, p.551 fig.6, with the drawings of the temple by the English traveller W.J. Bankes.

[57] Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.304-9 (name of the village); Omeri (forthcoming) on the site of 'Ayn Qaniya.

[58] Fossey (1897), p.63-4 nº73; Mouterde (1959), p.83-4 no.20.

(Hine[59]). The name of Rakhla should certainly appear in the list, because the inscriptions of Rakhle provide the names of several kinds of officials who supervised the building of at least two well-known temples.[60] The Acts of the Tyrian synode also attest that it became a bishopric and ranked among the cities of the province of Phoenice Paralia in AD 518; the village was promoted at the end of the fifth century AD, according to the name given to the city, 'Zenopolis' or 'Zeno(no)polis'.[61]

With regard to Burqush, the problem is much more complicated. This archaeological site was the home of two pagan sanctuaries, one of which was transformed into a Christian basilica.[62] Southeast of this architectural complex, which crowns the hill on a large terrace surrounded by several groups of tombs, the rocky spur has been completely cut and divided over two levels into several rooms with small basins. The remains of an ancient village are to be found around the hill, especially on its eastern slope. On the western slope, there are also greater buildings. In my opinion, Burqush is likely to be the site of Barkousa, which became the city of Justinianopolis.[63] In Late Antiquity, a handful of agglomerations experienced a real urban

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[59] Ptol. *Geogr.* 5.15.22; Joseph. *BJ* 2.95 (ed. A. Pelletier, *CUF* (1980), p.27). The ancient place name appears also in a Syriac document dated from ca AD 570 (ed. J.-B. Chabot, *CSCO* 103 [1933], p.145-56), which is notably related to Monophysite monasteries around Hine. See Lamy (1898), n^{os}19,72,75,76,78-81,83. According to a Greek inscription that was engraved on the podium of the temple at Hine, the managers of the local community were involved into the construction of the sacred precinct between AD 179 and 182: Fossey (1897), p.62 n°70; Mouterde (1959), pl.XI (copy of O. Puchstein).

[60] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.222-30. Cf. below for the temple officials of Rakhla.

[61] Honigmann (1951), p.44.

[62] Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.231-44; Freyberger (1990b); Ruprechtsberger (1992b), (1994) and (1996).

[63] I will give a detailed study of Burqush elsewhere. Contra Alt (1947), p.1-7, I think that the place name 'Barkousa' refers to the Hermonian site and not to Burqesha, near Qara. No ruin is known at Burqesha, which only appears to be a spot on the modern maps of Antilebanon. From this point of view, J. Nasrallah's study of Qalamounian antiquities and ancient topography would have disappointed Alt's expectations. See Nasrallah (1952), (1956) and (1958-9). Alt had only one reason to turn down the identification of Burqush with Barkousa: the fact that, under the reign of Justinian, the bishopric of Barkousa would have been only seven kilometres distant from that of Rakhla seemed impossible. Yet this argument is not very convincing, because other cities and bishoprics very close to ancient towns are known to have been founded in the Near East at the same period: in the Roman province of Arabia for instance, according to Gatier (1999), after Beelmeon (Ma'in, Jordan) was

development in Lebanon, such as Rakhla-Zenopolis and (maybe) Abila of Lysanias.[64] Of course, it does not mean per se that a village surrounded the pagan sanctuary of Burqush-Barkousa during the first three centuries AD. It is nonetheless very likely that the Early Byzantine agglomeration sprang at least from an embryonic Roman settlement.[65]

The above-mentioned case studies raise the issue of the connections between the villages and their sanctuaries. Although it is uncertain whether the former preceded the latter, it is useful to distinguish high places from the village sanctuaries in order to appraise their respective importance. Eusebius gave a concise description of the high place while dealing with the demolition of the famous shrine at Afqa on Mt Lebanon: 'This was a grove and precinct, not at a city centre nor among squares and streets, such as frequently adorn the cities for decoration, but it was off the beaten track away from main roads and junctions, founded for the hateful demon Aphrodite in a mountainous part of Lebanon at Aphaca.'[66] Isolated on the mountain, the two Hermonian sanctuaries of Mdoukha and Qasr Antar are likely to be high places. It is obvious from their location that each of them could attract the faithful from the surrounding villages. Nevertheless, the only cult site which would have drawn a large audience in the region was that of Qasr Antar. It may be infered from its reputation and (maybe) from the above-mentioned Helaliye inscription that this sanctuary played the same role as the major high places of the Roman Near East.

At least four village sanctuaries are identified for certain, namely 'Ayn Qaniya, Arne, Hine and Rakhle, for which inscriptions support the location of a rural community. Five other sites, namely 'Ayn Horche, Deir el-Aachaiyer, Burqush, Har Senaim and Qalaat Bustra, may also belong to this category. Thus, Mt Hermon seemingly was a country of village sanctuaries. Besides, it is doubtful whether

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founded as a city during the sixth century, the two cities and bishoprics of Madaba and Beelmeon were only 8 km apart.

[64] For Abila of Lysanias in the Barada valley, see Aliquot (1999-2003), p.241-7, with bibliography.

[65] See Gatier (2005), who pointed out that in the Roman Near East the Early Byzantine agglomerations never grew up out of nothing on the sites of the pagan rural sanctuaries.

[66] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.55.2, quoted from A. Cameron and S.G. Hall's translation (Oxford, 1999), p.144.

it was an exceptional case in the Roman Near East. I will not discuss here in detail the contrast between the two models introduced by P.-L. Gatier to describe the relationship of the rural sanctuaries with the villages of southern Syria (i.e., actually, the Hauran) and northern Syria (i.e., in fact, the 'Limestone Massif' within the territory of Antioch), but a remark may be made.[67] In the Roman Near East, the village sanctuaries seem to have outnumbered a few high places (e.g. Afqa, Carmel, Qasr Antar and Sheikh Barakat).[68] In comparison with Roman Syria, the study of the Hermonian sacred landscape leads to highlight the originality of the Antiochene, where sanctuaries were mostly high places.[69]

The epigraphic evidence mentions the officials involved in the religious life of the Hermonian communities. It provides information on the institutional framework in which village life and temple-building had their place. The officials' denomination was very close to the one in use in Lebanon and southern Syria. Two texts from Rîme and Rakhle actually show that some of them exercised an unspecified authority (ἀρχή) that was also known in the Abilene.[70] The Greek names of the 'managers' or 'commissioners' (ἐπιμεληταί), the 'administrators' (διοικηταί), the 'overseers' or 'supervisors' (ἐπίσκοποι), the 'temple-treasurers' (ἱεροταμίαι), and the 'priests' (ἱερεῖς) are more likely to be attributable to a Hellenized native organization than to a Roman institutional model.[71] The same conclusion could be drawn from the inscriptions which provide a set of evidence for the invocation of the goddess Tyche. Two texts from Rakhle and Rîme merely start with the ordinary invocation 'to the Good Fortune', while an inscription from Qasr Hammara dealing with the village of Ainkania carries on with the acclamation 'prosper, Fortune of Ain-

[67] Gatier (1997), p.769, followed by Sartre (2001), p.777.

[68] Callot and Gatier (1999), p.671 and p.682, about the sanctuary of the Jebel Sheikh Barakat.

[69] Nevertheless, as Callot and Gatier (1999) themselves admitted, there was at least one village sanctuary on the Limestone Massif, namely Mogiza (Me'ez), while Kaprobarada (Brad) could have been another exception to the above-stated rule.

[70] Mouterde (1959), p.82-3 n°19 (Rîme); Fossey (1897), p.64-5 n°75 (Rakhle); Sartre (1993a), p.53-4 n°2 (Rakhle); *SEG* 39 (1989), n°1565 (Brahlia, Abilene).

[71] E.g. Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.304-9, for Ainkania's commissioners; Fossey (1897), p.62 n°70 and Mouterde (1959), pl.XI, for commissioners in Hine; Sartre (1993a), p.53-4 n°2 and p.55-7 n°4, for Rakhla's administrators; Aliquot (2002), for an overseer in Segeira; Fossey (1897), p.64-5 n°75, for a temple-treasurer and a priest in Rakhle.

kania!'[72] On the nominal level, those rustic Fortunes seemed to be equivalent to the civic divinities already depicted on the Hellenistic coins of the Phoenician cities, and contrasted with the Roman Fortune of Berytus. However, on Mt Hermon as in the southern Beqâ' valley or the Abilene, the name of Tyche would rather be the translation of that of a native *gad*, that is a male genius invested with the same office as the Greek Fortune, and becoming a tutelary divinity of the village.

The offices finally call into question the issue of village autonomy. As in the neighbouring Hauran, the village treasure did not inevitably merge with that of an adjoining sanctuary. For instance in Aaiha, the construction of the temple was completed with money 'from the sacred funds'.[73] The same held true for the enclosure wall of Hine's sanctuary.[74] In Arne, the temple of Zeus was decorated 'at the expense of the god himself', while the village looked after the management of sacred estates.[75] In Rakhle, the restoration of a religious building was funded from the treasure surplus.[76] In the same village, the temple-treasurers of Leucothea used the cash balance to build a door in the year 379, i.e. AD 269 (τὰ λειφθέντα παρ' αὐτο/ῖς ἀργύρια ἀνάλωσαν τὰ / ὑπὲρ τῆς θύρας ἔ/τους θοτ').[77] Finally, an unpublished inscription of Rakhle suggests that Leucothea's sanctuary owned liquid assets and/or sacred estates which were lent at interest, because a building is said to have been erected in AD 253 'at the expense of the goddess taken from the interest'.

By and large, the social organization of the Hermonian communities proved similar to the one M. Sartre has studied in southern Syria.[78] Yet, outside the territory of Bostra, which was empty of village officials, the rural communities in the Hauran had two peculiarities: they substituted for the cities, and village officials only appeared outside the civic territories. Conversely, all the communities of Mt Hermon settled on the territory of Sidon, Damascus and Paneas, at

[72] Ghadban (1985 [1988]), p.304-9. Chéhab (1949-50), p.111, briefly mentioned the discovery of a turreted Tyche head at Deir el-Aachaiyer east of the temple.

[73] Mouterde (1951-2), p.33-5 n°4, cf. *BÉ* (1953), n°214 (Robert).

[74] Fossey (1897), p.62 n°70; Mouterde (1959), pl.XI.

[75] Fossey (1897), p.63-4 n°73; Mouterde (1959), p.83-4 n°20.

[76] Fossey (1897), p.64-5 n°75; Jalabert (1907), p.272 n°66.

[77] Jalabert (1907), p.274 n°68, l.5-8, with a slightly different text (ἀναλώσαντ[ες]); O. Puchstein read ANTA in the end of l.6, cf. Mouterde (1959), pl.XII.

[78] Sartre (1993b), (1999) and (2001), p.773-9.

least from the beginning of the first century AD onwards; and the Hermonian offices only referred either to the construction and improvement of religious buildings, or to the financial management of sacred property. Consequently, it is tempting to consider the temple officials, not as fully-qualified magistrates, but only as individuals who were recruited in the most powerful families of the mountain. J.-P. Rey-Coquais has recently drawn the same conclusion from the Qalamounian history and onomastics, although he did not consider the role of the Herodian rulers for the granting of Roman citizenship during the first century AD.[79] With regard to Mt Hermon, I should also emphasize the role possibly assigned by Rome to the cities which had definitely taken over from the Ituraean and Herodian rulers afterwards.

The lack of information prevents from reconstituting any expanded social group. The fact remains that, in the two villages where the epigraphic evidence provides enough information on this matter, namely Rakhle and 'Ayn Qaniya, the officials' onomastics show the endogamic feature of their recruiting, in so far as such characteristic names as Beeliabos, Beryllos, Diodoros or Okbeos alternated within the ruling families.[80] Moreover, it is obvious that the families holding a prominent position were especially bound to the temples, which they had funded, and the priesthoods, which they seem to have seized in some cases. It is certainly not by mere chance that the earliest inscription of Rakhle, dating from 60, mentioned 'the goddess of Moithos/u, son of Raios(?)', as is customary in the Near East to give the divinity the cult founder's name.[81] Similarly in Segeira's sanctuary, Menneas, son of Beeliabos and grandson of Beeliabos, flaunted himself as the 'supervisor of all the work done there'; his family was involved in the local cult, because Menneas' brother or nephew Neteiros was said to have been responsible for the celebration of festivals.[82] This kind of ostentatious display testifies to the

[79] Rey-Coquais (1994 [1997]).

[80] See Feissel (1983), p.605, about the onomastics of Rakhle, and Aliquot in Omeri (forthcoming) for the onomastics of Ainkania.

[81] For the text, see Sartre (1993a), p.55-7 n°4, l.1, cf. *BÉ* (1994), n°636 (Gatier): θεᾶς Μοιθου τοῦ Ραιο[υ – –]. The name of Moithos/u necessarily refers to the goddess (probably Leucothea), because it is in the genitive whereas the following names of the administrators are in the nominative.

[82] Aliquot (2002).

ritualized social competition that was at the origin of the rural temples.

Thus, the pre-eminence of village sanctuaries makes Mt Hermon (and, actually, all Lebanon) closer to the whole Roman Near East as a whole than to the Limestone Massif within the territory of Antioch. Local autonomy exclusively occurred in the management of a temple or a village treasure on Mt Hermon, so that it is tempting to consider that the supervision of financial and religious matters were seized by (rather than granted to) the families whose power was acknowledged by the imperial authorities and the three cities which shared the mountain among themselves.

Conclusion

The creation of a brand new set of rural sanctuaries during the Roman period represents in retrospect a major event of Lebanon's ancient history, which broke the rhythm of religious life in the area. When the Early Byzantine sources referred to the destruction of the pagan altars in Lebanon, despite their polemical and anachronistic contents, they taught that the mountainous shrines' closure in the fourth century AD actually was the end of an era. Going back to the earliest times, a few Lebanese sanctuaries appeared during the Hellenistic era, a period of uncertainties and transition in the area. Their genesis admittedly remains an insoluble problem. Moreover, drastic changes altered the holy places where cultic continuity between Hellenistic and Roman times can be argued. This testifies against a conception of gradual and linear evolution, and reminds us that beyond the issue of cultic continuity, if there was one, changes in religious practices must be analyzed. Besides, as current evidence shows, religious construction only reached its peak after the era of the client kings, which requires an explanation.

The study of the Hermonian sanctuaries and villages during the Roman period provides enough information to grasp the importance and social dimension of this long-term change on a local scale. The principles which underlied the location of sanctuaries, and the connections of the rural communities with their temples on Mt Hermon, prove similar to those already recognized as decisive in other areas of the Roman Near East, but various forms of particularism bestowed an identity on this ancient 'pays'. From the end of the first

century AD, the civic territories of Sidon, Paneas, and Damascus experienced a frenzy of religious building on their mountainous confines. Considering its unity in time and space, and the links and hierarchy between its basic elements (high places, village sanctuaries, villages, hamlets, and farmsteads), the country showed a coherent organization that must be appreciated in the broader context of the regional civic network. After the fall of the client kings, who had been involved in the religious matters of their own principalities, Hellenized cliques rose in the villages. The area went through a regional restoration of order and a local scattering of power altogether. Under Roman rule and within the civic territories, local potentates managed to assert their authority over the ordinary man while giving him the benefit of their protection and generosity. In return, the sanctuaries and their cults offered the indigenous strongmen a theatre in which they could compete for prestige. There were hints of collective action, but they always concerned the communities' holy places. Consequently, the rural sanctuary may well represent the public place around which the social relations had formed in the countryside. The development of the Hermonian village institutions unfortunately remains in the dark until the Early Byzantine period, contrary to what is known for instance in the neighbouring Hauran. The evolution from the rural settlement up to the classical city was anything but unavoidable: while Paneas had been founded as a town as early as 2 BC, Rakhla-Zenopolis and Barkousa-Justinianopolis became cities only in the fifth and sixth centuries. In Late Antiquity, even if the weight of the wealthy landowners over the mountainous communities was as important as before, the competition in which the villages were involved to achieve a civic status added to personal rivalries. At that time, the whole Lebanon had been christianized long ago, and the pagan rural sanctuary had definitely lost its role of territory marker and place of mediation.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE IN THE ROMAN NEAR EAST: TEMPLES OF THE BASALT LANDS (TRACHON AND HAURAN)

ARTHUR SEGAL

Introduction

We have divided the temples under discussion in this study into two distinctive categories: Vitruvian and non-Vitruvian temples. These terms as applied here require an explanation. We regard as 'Vitruvian' any temple whose plan, design and architectural decoration can be described and examined according to the parameters, terminology and architectural vocabulary as used by Vitruvius in his *De architectura*. Temples which cannot be described or examined according to the parameters applied by Vitruvius, are regarded by us as 'non-Vitruvian'. Although such broad and obviously imprecise definitions are not sufficient in dealing with such a heterogeneous and complicated group of buildings, they are at least a convenient point of departure for the more detailed typological and architectural discussion further on. These definitions are, in fact, crucial in dealing with the group of eighteen temples included in this study. The enormous variety of their plans, their unique spatial designs and decorations, and original architectural solutions, all require a clear architectural vocabulary, if we wish not only to appreciate these beautiful buildings, but also to understand their unique place in the architectural history of the Roman Near East.

The Basalt Lands—Geographical and Historical Background

The Trachon and the Hauran were always regarded as frontier areas, lands on the fringe of the desert, in spite of being relatively close to Damascus to the north and the territories of the Decapolis cities to the west and south [PLATES I, XII].[1] As early as the Hellenistic

[1] Abel (1967), p.274-5l; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.170-3; id. (1976); Miller (1984), p.8-55; Farioli-Companati (1992).

period, the Hauran [Αὐρανιτις] and the Trachon [Τραχωνιτις] were mentioned in various historical sources as dangerous and wild areas, inhabited by warlike tribes and brigands. The Trachon, whose Greek name is derived from the word τραχύς, 'jagged', 'rough', but also 'savage', was an exceptionally difficult area to pass through, because of its rough terrain, harsh basalt rocks, and gloomy, uninviting landscape. Even in modern times the reputation of the Trachon remains very doubtful, as its name 'Ledja', meaning in Arabic a retreat, or a hiding place, indicates.

In the third century BC both the Hauran and the Trachon were under Ptolemaic rule, as we learn from the Zenon Archive.[2] In the early years of the Hasmonaean revolt, the Hasmonaean and Nabataean armies joined forces here against their common enemy, the Seleucids.[3] Following the establishment of the province of Syria in 63 BC, both the Trachon and the Hauran were incorporated into the new province (Jos. *AJ* 14.38-9). During the early years of Herod's reign, the Trachon, the Hauran and a few other territories in Judaea were regarded as private domains of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra VII (Jos. *AJ* 15.92-6; *BJ* 1.360-1). The battle of Actium and the establishment of a Roman province in Egypt brought about profound changes also in this remote part of the Roman Near East. Following many years of legal disputes, skirmishes and even wars between the Ituraeans, Nabataeans and Herod king of Judaea, Augustus decided in 20 BC to transfer the territories of Golan, Bashan, Trachon and Hauran to Herod (Jos. *AJ* 15.343,360; Dio 44.9.3).[4] The latter acted very promptly: in order to consolidate his rule over a predominantly Nabataean area, he established military colonies in his new territories. The settlers were Babylonian Jews and Idumaeans (Jos. *AJ* 16.285; 17.23-9).[5] Following Herod's death in 4 BC, both the Trachon and the Hauran were granted to Philippus, his youngest son (Jos. *AJ* 17.319), and later passed to Agrippa I and, finally, to Agrippa II, the last rulers of the Herodian dynasty. The Herodian

[2] Edgar (1925), n°59008, l.35. Cf. Jones (1971), p.240 and p.449-50; Shalit; Isaac (1984), p.181 n.59.

[3] Abel (1949), p.97-100; Starcky (1966), p.905; Negev (1977), p.532; Bowersock (1983), p.19; Wenning (1992) and (1994).

[4] Smallwood (1976), p.46 and p.61; Schürer, *HJP* I (1973), p.319 and p.561-73.

[5] Cohen (1972); Applebaum (1989); Shatzman (1991), p.260-5.

rule over the Trachon and the Hauran thus lasted for nearly one hundred years.

The establishment of *provincia* Arabia in AD 106 was a turning point in the history of the region. Bostra, in the southern Hauran, became the capital of the new province. The legion III Cyrenaica, transferred from North Africa to the new province, built its permanent base at Bostra. The paving of the *Via Traiana Nova* followed soon, in AD 115. From now on, the Trachon and the Hauran, both conveniently located between the *provincia* Syria to the north and *provincia* Arabia to the south, entered a period of intensive romanization, urbanization and prosperity, which lasted for almost one hundred and fifty years.[6]

Almost all the temples examined in this study were built during this period of prosperity enjoyed in both the Trachon and the Hauran, and should be regarded as the most eloquent and meaningful expression of the local architectural traditions. The local architects and builders, who erected these temples, were exposed to the enormous influence of Roman imperial architecture. It is easy to trace this influence in both the plans of the temples and many decorative elements employed. However, in spite of this overwhelming influence, they managed to preserve local traditions and offer unique and original spatial solutions, while working with one of the most extremely difficult and harshest stone ever used in building, namely basalt.

Description of the 'Vitruvian' Temples

Distylon in Antis

The temple at Slem

The village of Slem is located in the Hauran, 15 km southwest of Philippopolis (Shuhba) [PLATE XII].[7] Its temple was investigated for the first time in 1819 by W.J. Bankes and C. Barry, and early in the twentieth century by H.C. Butler. Between 1980 and 1988 it has been examined by K.S. Freyberger.[8] The temple's plan is unique

[6] Bowersock (1983), p.1-75; Glueck (1965), p.3-45; Sartre (1991), p.46-9; Millar (1993), p.27-126; Woolf (1997); Gawlikowski (1997).

[7] Dussaud (1927), p.369.

[8] W.J. Bankes (1786-1855) surveyed Slem in 1819, accompanied by C. Barry

and its architectural decoration exceptionally rich. Rectangular in its plan (18.30m x 13.30m), it was built on a 2.40 m high podium, with its entrance front facing east. Its plan consists of three units, a *pronaos*, a *naos* and an *adyton* [PLATES XIII-XIV]. Looking at the temple from the east, one notices two columns placed between two exceptionally wide *antae*, of 3.60m each. Two additional columns were set precisely behind the front ones. In both *antae* there were staircases, which made the *antae*, as mentioned above, exceptionally wide, leaving very limited space for the *pronaos*, which looked rather like a corridor [PLATE XIV]. A steep and narrow flight of steps passed from outside between the *antae* and the columns, towards the only entrance to the *naos*. The staircases in the two *antae* were both built in a similar manner, climbing spirally around the central square pillar. In the centre of the northern and the southern walls of the main *naos* (10.80m x 8.40m), a pair of pilasters was placed to carry a transverse arch, essential to roof the *naos*.

The *adyton* of the temple occupies the whole western wall of the *naos*. In its centre, one finds a semicircular cult niche (2.65m wide), roofed by a half dome, and flanked by two shallow rectangular rooms. The two rooms could be reached from the *naos* through the entrances located on either side of the central cult niche. Four columns might have stood parallel and adjacent to the *adyton* front, suggested in Butler's reconstruction, for there is a similar arrangement in the *adyta* of the temples at Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh [PLATES XXI, XXVII].

The walls of the temple at Slem were embellished on the outside by pilasters springing from 'Attic' bases (Vitr. *De arch.* 3.5) and topped by composite Ionic-Corinthian capitals [PLATE XIV]. The entablature of the temple at Slem is exceptionally rich and varied in its decoration, combining geometrical, floral, zoomorphic and even anthropomorphic elements. However, what makes the entablature of the temple at Slem so unusual are two square turrets, placed at the two corners behind the entrance front pediment (*tympanon*).[9] For the source of inspiration of those peculiar structures we should look

(1795-1860), who made a schematic plan of the temple, see below, n.18. See Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 5 ('Hauran plain and Djebel Hauran'), p.356-9, with fig.319-20 and pl.XXVI-XXVII. Cf. Freyberger (1991); Barcsay-Regner (1991); Dentzer-Feydy (1997).

[9] Strong (1960), fig.11-4 and pl.XIV-XV; Blagg (1990)

at traditional *acroteria*, but here in Slem, instead of the familiar floral *acroteria*, we find square turrets, clad with acanthus leaves [PLATE XIV].[10] Other additional decorative elements, not to be found in any other temple in the Roman Near East, are four small triangular pediments, placed at the two ends of each of the temple's side walls slanting roof.[11] In spite of the fact that only one of these pediments has survived *in situ*, originally there must have been four of them, placed symmetrically at each corner of the roof.

The temple of Zeus and Athena at Mushennef (AD 171)

The village of Mushennef (ancient Nela) is located 15 km east of Qanawat [PLATE XII].[12] The site and its temple were surveyed early in the twentieth century by Butler, and again in 1907 by C. Ward.[13] Numerous inscriptions found in the temple and its vicinity indicate that the temple was dedicated to both Zeus and Athena.[14] Recently, the temple has been partially restored by the Syrian

[10] There are only two other temples in the Roman Near East, both in Syria, which feature the similar square turrets placed at the corners of a temple's roof, namely the temple of Bel at Palmyra, and the temple at Dmeir. In both these temples the turrets functioned actually as the exits of the stairwells leading from the *naos* or the *adyton* areas towards the roof. On the flat roof of the temple of Bel at Palmyra, which was completed in the first half of the second century AD, there were four square turrets, arranged symmetrically in the four corners of the temple's roof. Three out of four functioned indeed as the exits of the stairwells leading from the two *adyta* to the temple's roof, while the fourth one was built just for the sake of symmetry. The turrets were decorated in their upper parts by merlons. See Seyrig, Amy and Will (1968-75), I, p.61-4, fig.32-3; II, pl.116-8,136-7,140-1; Amy (1950), p.98-106, fig.15-9. As regards Dmeir, its almost perfectly preserved temple was dedicated in AD 245 to the imperial cult of Philip 'the Arab' and his wife Otacilia Severa, as both the inscriptions and the relief portraits of the emperor and his wife indicate. The inscriptions and the portraits were located on the eastern wall of the temple. The arrangement of the four turrets on the flat roof of the temple at Dmeir was similar to that of the Bel temple, however, contrary to the latter, only one out of four turrets functioned as the exit of the stairwell, while the other three were purely decorative. Notwithstanding that, all four were built identical, and were embellished with merlons, very much like the turrets at the temple of Bel in Palmyra. See ibid., p.83-7, fig.1-3; Brümmer (1985), fig.1-2, pl.22-5; Klinkott (1989), fig.1-12; Seyrig, Amy and Will (1968-75), I, p.79-80; II, pl.142; Bounni (1999), fig.17-22. In his recent reconstruction of the temple in Isriye in North Syria, Gogräfe (1997), fig.6, suggested to place on the temple's roof two square turrets decorated with merlons. On the stairwells and the turrets in the temple at Slem, see above, n.8-9.

[11] Dentzer-Feydy (1986), pl.I-XXIV.

[12] Dussaud (1927), p.342 and p.359.

[13] Butler in *PAAES* II, p.346-51; Ward (1907a), pl.I-IV.

[14] Prentice in *PAAES* III, p.298-304.

Department of Antiquities.[15] It stood in a carefully paved rectangular open court, on its north-south axis [PLATE XV]. This *temenos* was surrounded by four walls, the southern one facing a huge pool. Parallel to the walls (except the southern one), there were colonnades on their inner sides. The temple was placed with its rear (southern) wall close to the pool, and its entrance front facing north. By placing the temple at the rear of the *temenos*, a huge, open piazza was created in front of the temple itself. The overall arrangement of the *temenos* and temple is axial, symmetrical and frontal.

The temple was built on a low podium. Wide steps at its north led from the *temenos* to the deep *pronaos* of the temple [PLATES XV-XVI]. At the entrance to the *pronaos* there were two columns, flanked by *antae*. The two smooth column shafts, each made of four drums, were placed upon Attic bases and carried Corinthian capitals. The wider central *intercolumnium* indicates that it is plausible to reconstruct here a 'Syrian pediment', as suggested by both Butler and Ward [PLATE XVI].[16] The temple walls were built of smoothly dressed ashlars without any binding material. Architectural decorations, especially the capitals and the entablature, were beautifully executed.

The temple at Hebran (AD 155)

The small village of Hebran is located ca 15 km northeast of Bostra [PLATE XII].[17] The remains of the temple and its open court [the *temenos*] were examined for the first time in 1819 by Bankes and Barry.[18] The site has been visited since by many travelers and scholars. In 1909, when Butler examined the site and prepared a suggested reconstruction of the temple, it was already partially dis-

[15] Burns (1999), p.161; Ball (1994), p.82; Butcher (2003), p.167.

[16] Elements such as the 'Syrian gable', the 'broken gable' or the 'arched gable' are considered by architectural historians as patently baroque. German scholars were the first to compare these elements (in the case of Petra) to the Pompeian wall-paintings (second style), see Bachmann, Watzinger and Wiegand (1921), p.12-28; Kohl (1910), p.26-43. Cf. Lyttelton (1974), p.195-7. On the early appearance of the 'Syrian gable', see Fischer (1990); Lloyd-Morgan (1990), p.143-51.

[17] Dussaud (1927), p.355.

[18] When Bankes and Barry surveyed the temple in 1819, Barry made one sketch of it. They never published the descriptions of their travels, but the sketches and drawings, made mainly by Barry, are kept in the regional archives of Dorset County in Dorchester. On the Bankes archive in general, see Bowsher (1997); Dentzer-Feydy (1997). On Bankes himself, see Bankes (1953), p.142-7; Mitchell (1994), p.24-7; Lewis e.a. (1996).

mantled.[19] The temple (15m x 9.50m) stood on a podium with its entrance front facing east [PLATE XVII]. Two columns set on the Attic bases and topped by Ionic capitals were placed between the *antae* [PLATE XVIII]. In the wall dividing the *pronaos* from the *naos*, on either sides of the entrance, were square niches. Two pairs of pilasters, each pair carrying an arch, were set along the long walls of the *naos* [13.55m x 7m], allowing the use of basalt slabs for roofing. The entrance front of this small temple is arranged as a *distylon in antis*, but the *antae* are designed as pilasters which are not exactly at the corners of the façade. This creates the illusion that the temple façade is *tetrastylon prostylon*.

The north and south temples at Atil (AD 151)

The village of Atil (ancient Atheila) is located in the western Hauran, ca 14 km west of Qanawat [PLATE XII].[20] From the early nineteenth century onwards, it has been visited by many scholars, among them Bankes and Barry in 1819, L. Laborde in 1827 and E. Rey in 1857, to mention just a few [PLATE XIX].[21] When Butler visited the site in 1899, both temples were already partially dismantled. In spite of that, he managed to examine them both and to suggest detailed reconstructions [PLATE XX].[22] The two temples were almost identical in their plans and architectural details, but as the southern one survived better than the northern one, we shall describe and examine only the former. The south temple was built on a 2m high podium, with its entrance wall facing east. A narrow stairway (2.20m) was located in front of the central *intercolumnium* (3.50m wide) of the *distylon in antis* [PLATE XX]. Its two columns were placed on Attic bases and carried Corinthian capitals. The *antae* were topped by Corinthian capitals matching the columns. Both the *antae* and the columns carried a 'Syrian pediment', richly decorated in geometrical and floral patterns [PLATES XIX-XX].

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[19] Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 5 (1915), p.323-5, pl.XX.

[20] Dussaud (1927), p.349 n.8; Avi-Yonah (1976), p.33.

[21] Bankes and Barry were the first to survey the two temples and to prepare their schematic plans. See Rey (1860), pl.IX; Brünnow and von Domaszewski (1909), p.102-6.

[22] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.343-6, fig.120; id. in *PUAES* II.A, part 5 (1915), p.355-6.

An unusual feature of the temple's entrance front were the four brackets meant to carry statues, placed about 3m above the level of the podium [PLATES XIX-XX].[23] The brackets protruded eastwards, two from the outer faces of the *antae*, and two from the column shafts. The only other temples in the Roman Near East decorated in the same manner are the temple of Baal-Shamin at Palmyra and the so-called temple C in Qanawat [PLATE XLI].[24] One doorway led from the *pronaos* to the *naos*. One transverse arch divided the *naos* into two, allowing it to be easily roofed by means of basalt

[23] Vertical supports called consoles constituted a widespread component of both Greek and Roman architecture. Protruding from flat walls, they were intended to bear stone beams, usually above doorways or windows. The fronts of the consoles were sometimes decorated, but usually left smooth. In many instances, even when the lintel above the door needed no supports at all, the consoles were placed for decoration only. I believe that it is here that we should seek the source of the brackets. Apparently, the brackets intended to carry the statues originated, like the consoles, in their functional past. A look at the colonnaded streets shows that even when the street level changes, the architrave carried on the columns must remain horizontal and the height of the column must remain uniform. In order to ensure this and to preserve the continuity of the colonnades, despite the changing ground level, one section of the architrave reached the next as it rested on a horizontal bracket set at the required height on the shaft of the column, and not on its top, i.e. on the capital. In spite of the fact that the earliest of the colonnaded streets is from the end of the first century AD, we already find the use of brackets in colonnades in the Hellenistic period. See, e.g., the peristyle courtyard in the 'House of Trident' in the so-called Theatre quarter in Delos. The house is dated from the second half of the second century BC. In its courtyard the two colonnades that were part of the peristyle met as described above, see Webb (1996), p.140-1, fig.123-5. In the collection of the Louvre are two porphyry columns, 2.60m tall and 0.60m in diameter each, decorated in their upper part with the busts of Nerva and Trajan. These were, so it seems, executed in the same material, but separately and later attached to the column shafts. The two perfectly preserved porphyry columns and their busts were brought to Paris from Rome, but their original architectural context is unknown, see Malgouyres (2003), p.51-4, fig.18; Bober and Rubinstein (1986), p.220-1, fig.187a. I am not aware of the existence of any other example of tri-dimensional sculpture attached to the column shaft preserved from Antiquity. However, it is worth mentioning the three column shafts still standing in their original location along the main colonnaded street at Perge in Pamphylia. In the upper part of each of these column shafts are reliefs of figures, ca 0.60 m high, executed in low relief, one of which can be identified as Artemis. Contrary to the column shafts from the Louvre, in Perge we find reliefs and not tri-dimensional figures. Nevertheless, in both instances there are column shafts embellished with human figures, instead of column shafts functioning as supporters of sculptures perched on their tops. On Perge, see Pekman (1973); Akurgal (1978), p.329-33, fig.162, pl.96b; Boatwright (1993); Abbasoglu (2001), fig.47.

[24] On the temple of Baal-Shamin at Palmyra, see Collart and Vicari (1969). On temple C at Qanawat see below, with n.76-9.

slabs laid on the wall tops and the arch. Both temples were built of meticulously dressed basalt ashlars. Their entablature and capitals as well as brackets and pilasters all attest to superb craftsmanship, which is a noteworthy achievement indeed, as it was executed in an extremely harsh basalt stone.

Tetrastylon prostylon

The temple of Tyche at Is-Sanamen (AD 191)

Is-Sanamen (ancient Aere) is located 55 km north of Dar'a (ancient Adra'a) [PLATE XII].[25] When Bankes and Barry visited the site in 1819, there was a huge pond at the rear south of the temple of which nothing remains today.[26] When Butler surveyed the site in 1900, the entrance front of the temple was already dismantled, but he managed to prepare a detailed suggested reconstruction of the temple's entrance front through careful examination of the architectural fragments scattered in the vicinity of the temple, or reused in the nearby modern buildings.[27] Additional suggested reconstructions were drawn by L. Cummings in 1909.[28] During the two last decades of the twentieth century the remains of the temple were partially reconstructed by the Syrian Department of Antiquities and new research was carried out by K.S. Freyberger.[29]

In its original form, the temple was located in an open court, surrounded by colonnades, and its rear, southern wall and the two side walls protruded into the nearby pool. The temple, built on a 1.70m high podium, is orientated along a north-south axis, its entrance facing north. In Butler's reconstruction, a flight of ten steps placed between the *antae* led from the *temenos* towards the *porticus* of four columns placed on the low pedestals [PLATE XXI]. The unfluted columns were topped by Corinthian capitals. The *intercolumnium* between the two central columns of the *porticus* must have been ca 4m, which suggests that it might have carried a 'Syrian pediment' instead of a

[25] Dussaud (1927), p.327; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.168 n.293, map 19; id. (1976), p.27.

[26] When Bankes and Barry visitied the site, Barry made two drawings; one of the temple and another one of the *temenos*, see above, n.18.

[27] Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 5 (1915), p.315-22, fig.287-93, pl.XIX; id. (1906); id. (1929), p.12-7.

[28] Cummings (1909).

[29] Freyberger (1989b) and (1990a).

normal, triangular one. One entered the temple through three doorways, the central one twice as high as the side entrances. The temple itself consists of one room only [10m x 7.50m] which is the *naos*; its inner, southern wall functioned as an *adyton*. A lavishly decorated *porticus* substituted the *pronaos* [PLATE XXI].

The semicircular cult niche in the very centre of the southern wall formed the central feature of an *adyton*. It was roofed by a half dome, shaped on its inner side as a shell [conch]. The cult niche was flanked by two rooms. The doorways to the rooms were arranged symmetrically on each side of the semicircular cult niche. Parallel and adjacent to the *adyton* wall stood four columns, set on high pedestals, two of them flanking the cult niche and the other two being placed in the southeast and southwest corners of the *naos* [PLATE XXII]. The four columns, which were topped by carefully executed Corinthian capitals, carried an arched entablature. The latter, while following the semicircular shape of a half dome, added even more splendour to a lavishly decorated *adyton* [fig.11]. The overall arrangement of the *adyton* speaks of rigid symmetry and frontality. This arrangement of the *adyton* is in almost every detail similar to that of the temple at Mismiyeh [PLATE XXVII].[30] The latter was erected approximately thirty years earlier, so it might be regarded as a possible source of inspiration for the temple at Is-Sanamen.[31] The two doorways to the rooms placed on either sides of the cult niche were embellished with geometrical and floral patterns executed on both jambs and lintels. Above the doorways were huge windows decorated in a similar manner. From the semicircular cult niche, one could pass through a narrow but comfortable corridor to the western room, and from there climb to the temple roof through the staircase. Along both the western and the eastern walls of the *naos* two half columns were attached to each wall. Like the columns placed in front of the *adyton*, these half columns were set on high attached pedestals and topped by Corinthian capitals. The half columns fulfilled the same functions as the columns in front of the *adyton*; they carried the entablature along the side walls of the *naos* [PLATE XXII]. The most extraordinary features of the *naos* were six brackets arranged in two

[30] Segal (1998).

[31] The temple at Mismiyeh was erected betweem AD 164-9 and the temple at Is-Sanamen in AD 191, see above, n.24. Cf. Waddington (1870), nº2413.

rows, three on the eastern wall and three on the western wall of the *naos* [PLATES XXI-XXII]. The brackets, placed 1.70m above the floor of the *naos*, were arranged symmetrically between the half columns attached to the eastern and western walls of the *naos*. The only use of these brackets one could think of was to carry statues.[32] Again, the temple at Mismiyeh is the only other temple in the Roman Near East in which one finds brackets for carrying statues in the *naos*. The temple could have been roofed by a regular wooden gable roof. The very fact that the *naos* was only 7.80m wide means that there could not have been serious difficulties in roofing it.

The temple of Zeus at Qanawat

The Decapolis city of Qanawat is located in the eastern Hauran, 10 km northeast of Suweida [PLATE XII].[33] The temple of Zeus is one of three temples known to us on the site. It was surveyed and examined by many travelers and scholars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[34] New research on the temple has been conducted during the last decade of the twentieth century by K.S. Freyberger and T. Fischer.[35] We do not know precisely when the temple was erected, but a few inscriptions found in the vicinity of the temple hint at the second half of the second century AD.[36] At 30.50m x 14.20m, it was actually the largest temple erected in the Hauran and the Trachon in the Roman Period [PLATE XXIII]. The entrance of the temple faces north and could be approached by a 12m wide flight of steps placed between two *antae*. Four very tall (10m) and slender columns, which formed the *porticus*, were placed

[32] On the origin and the significance of the brackets see above, n.23. What makes the brackets in Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh so unique is that they are set inside the *naos*. The phenomenon is unparalleled in Classical architecture. Despite the fact that brackets in colonnades were already known in the Hellenistic period, it is more logical to assume that the direct source of inspiration for the builders of the temples at Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh were the brackets bearing the statues, which decorated the *porticus* of the temple of Baal-Shamin at Palmyra, or the colonnaded streets in the cities of Syria and Arabia, see below, n.79. On the temple at Mismiyeh, see below, n.41-7.

[33] Dussaud (1927), p.362-4; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.117 and p.172; Spijkerman (1978), p.90-5, pl.67.

[34] Brünnow and von Domaszewski (1909), p.134-7, fig.1029-31; Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 5 (1915), p.347-50, fig.315, pl.XXII-XXIV; Moulton (1926-7); Burns (1999), p.195-8.

[35] Freyberger (2000), pl.33-6; Fischer (2000), pl.37-8.

[36] Prentice in *PAAES* III (1908), n^{os}413-413a, p.320-1.

in front of the temple's *pronaos*. The *intercolumnium* between the two central columns of the *porticus* was 5.50m, which clearly indicates that the *porticus* carried a 'Syrian pediment' and not a regular, triangular one [PLATE XXIV]. As mentioned above, the four columns of the *porticus* were exceptionally tall and slender. The ratio of the shaft's diameter to its length is 1:10. We know only of one other temple in the Roman Near East (the *Kalybe* temple in Bostra) whose columns were even taller and slenderer.[37] Each one of the *porticus*' columns shafts consisted of twelve drums, was placed on an 'Attic' base (Vitr. *De arch.* 3.5) and was topped by a Corinthian capital. *Enthasis* is clearly visible in each column shaft.

Between the *antae* of the *pronaos* two columns were placed, exactly behind the two central columns of the *porticus*. This *distylon in antis* arrangement of the entrance to the temple ensured an unobstructed view towards the entrance to the *naos* [PLATE XXIV]. From the *pronaos* (10m x 4m) a very impressive doorway (8m high and 4.70m wide) led to the *naos*. The side walls of the *pronaos* were exceptionally thick, as each one accommodated a small room trapezoid in shape. This peculiar shape of the two rooms was caused by the walls of the rooms facing the passage being diagonal and not parallel to the west and east walls of the temple. As a result, the passage from the *pronaos* to the *naos* is funnel like [PLATE XXIII]. The room in the western *anta* accommodated a staircase, while the eastern one remained empty; the size and shape of the latter is simply an outcome of a desire to maintain a symmetrical arrangement for both *antae*.[38] The rectangular *naos* is 15m long and 11.50m wide. Its floor level is identical to that of the *pronaos*. Two rows of columns divide the *naos* into a central nave (7m wide) and two isles (2m wide each). The columns stood on the high pedestals and reached the height of 8.50m. Two rows of columns allowed the temple to be roofed by the means of basalt slabs only, without any need for wooden structure [PLATE XXIII]. The *adyton* occupied the whole length of the southern wall of the *naos*. It comprised three rooms, of which the central one, as wide as a nave, must have functioned as cult niche. It is flanked by smaller rooms accessible from it. The floor level of the central room and the side rooms was 1.50m higher than the floor

[37] See below, with n.87-8.
[38] Amy (1950), p.94-5, fig.11-2.

level of the *naos*. The central room must have been roofed by a barrel vault, while the side rooms were roofed by slabs. In the walls of the rooms facing the isles two niches were, on either side, arranged one above the other.

The temple at Brekeh

Brekeh is a small village located at the northern edge of the Hauran, ca 20 km northwest of Qanawat [PLATE XII].[39] The site and its temple were examined by Butler in 1904.[40] The small temple (9.65m x 8.50m) was built on a 1.80m high podium, its east front approached by a wide flight of nine steps terminated on both sides by the sloping *antae* [PLATE XXV]. The temple itself consists of one hall, the *naos*. Instead of a *pronaos*, there was a *porticus* of four columns arranged in front of the entrance wall, facing east. Unfluted column shafts were placed on Attic bases and topped by Ionic capitals. The space between the two central columns was much wider than the spaces between the side columns, indicating that the *porticus* was carrying a 'Syrian pediment' instead of a triangular one. A single doorway (4m x 2.30m) led to the *naos*. On either side of the doorway semicircular decorative niches were placed 2.50m above the podium floor and roofed by half domes. Each niche was framed by two pairs of small half columns, carrying a 'Syrian pediment'. These small columns were carried on the brackets, and topped by Ionic capitals. The niches, as all the rest of the architectural decorations in the temple at Brekeh, show a superb standard of craftsmanship. The inner space of the *naos* (7.86m x 6.79m) was left undecorated except the western wall. In its centre stood a semicircular cult niche (1.52m in diameter), flanked by a pair of pilasters on either side. The outer walls of the temple were decorated by pilasters placed on 'Attic' bases and topped by Ionic capitals.

Hexastylon Prostylon

The temple at Mismiyeh (AD 164-9)

Mismiyeh is located at the northern edge of the Trachon, in the Ledja [PLATE XII].[41] The village can be identified with ancient

[39] Dussaud (1927), p.372-3.
[40] Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 7 (1919), p.409-12, fig.352, pl.XXIX.
[41] Dussaud (1927), p.376-8; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.171, fig.20; id. (1976), p.105.

Phaene (Φαίνα), which is known to have been an important army base during the Roman period.[42] The first modern scholar to visit the temple was J. Burckhardt in 1810.[43] Bankes and Barry surveyed Mismiyeh in 1819, and made a schematic, but precise plan of the temple and an exceptionally accurate and beautiful drawing of its interior space. Many other travelers and scholars visited the site, among them L. de Laborde in 1827, E. Rey in 1857 and M. de Vogüé in 1860.[44] The last scholar to visit the temple before it was dismantled was S. Merill in 1875.[45] In that year it was photographed by T. Dumas [PLATE XXVI]. However, in the same year or the following one, the temple was dismantled, and its stones were used for the building of barracks by the Turkish Army.[46]

The Mismiyeh temple was located in a paved *temenos* surrounded by colonnades. It was rectangular in shape (24.28m x 16.40m) and stood on a podium. The entrance, in one of the short walls, faced east. The temple consisted of one room, the *naos*, and instead of a *pronaos*, a *porticus* of six columns was set parallel to the entrance wall [PLATES XXVI, XXVIII]. Occupying the full width of the podium, a staircase of six steps led from the *temenos* to the narrow, rectangular area opposite the entrance wall, where the *porticus* of six columns stood. The space between the two central columns was greater than the spaces between the other columns, allowing an unobstructive view into the *naos*.

The unfluted column shafts, which stood upon high pedestals, were constructed of several drums, set on 'Attic' bases and topped with pseudo-Doric capitals [PLATE XXVI]. The exceptionally wide span between the two central columns of the *porticus* suggests that the entablature carried upon the columns of the *porticus* was an arched one, creating a 'Syrian pediment' [PLATE XXVIII]. There were

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[42] On the history of Phaene, see Segal (1998), p.110 with n.1-3.

[43] Burckhardt (1822), p.115-8.

[44] De Laborde (1837), p.57, pl.51; Robinson (1837), p.130-1; Rey (1860), pl.3; De Vogüé (1867), p.45, pl.VII.

[45] Merill (1881), p.16-22.

[46] Although the temple at Mismiyeh was totally dismantled soon after 1875, it continued to occupy scholars of classical architecture. See Weigand (1938), fig.1-6; Crowfoot (1941), p.61, pl.VIIIa; Lassus (1947), p.144, fig.60; Hill (1975), fig.2-3; Ma'oz (1990); Segal (1998). The temple at Mismiyeh was not the only one to be dismantled in southern Syria in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, e.g. the temple at Rimet Hazem (ca 10 km northwest of Suweida), also investigated by Bankes and Barry in 1819, see Dentzer-Feydy (1998), fig.1-22.

three rectangular doorways in the entrance wall, the central one of which was higher and wider than the others. The height of the two side ones was half that of the central one. Above each side doorway was a semicircular niche, roofed by a half dome and framed by pairs of columns carrying 'Syrian pediments'. All three doorways were designed alike. The doorposts were richly decorated, and the lintels rested on the consoles [PLATES XXVI,XXVIII].

The inner space of the temple (15.09m x 13.78m), almost square in its plan, was divided by four centrally placed columns into a monocentered square nave, with four rectangular isles arranged around it [PLATE XXVII]. Opposite each column stood two attached half-columns set into both the two long and two short walls of the *naos*. Hence, the *naos* contained a total of four columns, eight half-columns and four quarter columns placed in its four corners. All these were placed on the pedestals and topped with Corinthian capitals. The *naos* had two windows, set in the middle, in the upper part of the two longer (northern and southern) walls. The windows and the three entrances must have allowed plenty of light into the *naos* [PLATE XXVII].[47] In the centre of the western wall, on its inner side, was a semicircular cult niche (diameter: 4.84m), flanked by two rectangular rooms. The cult niche, which was roofed with a half-dome, shaped internally like a conch, and the two adjacent rooms, must have functioned as an *adyton*. Despite an almost square plan of the *naos*, it gave the impression of a rectangular rather than a square hall, with a semicircular cult niche at the centre of the western wall, opposite the entrance wall. Furthermore, the very arrangement of the entrance wall, emphasizing the central door and the location of the semicircular cult niche of the *adyton* opposite the main door and in line with it, strengthened the axial, frontal and symmetrical sense

[47] The very existence of windows in the temple is a very peculiar and intriguing feature. Windows in Graeco-Roman temples are very rare, because gods, unlike the mortals, can manage very well without light and fresh air. Thus, the two windows in Mismiyeh must have fulfilled their basic function, i.e. allowing plenty of light and fresh air to penetrate the inner space of the temple. So it is plausible to assume that the worshipers were allowed to enter the *naos* and to face the *adyton*, instead of remaining in the *temenos*, outside the temple, as was customary in the Classical world. On windows in Greek and Roman religious architecture in general, see Rivoira (1925), p.185, p.188 and p.234; Robertson (1954), p.51 n.1; Lawrence (1957), p.162, p.166 and p.187; Ward-Perkins (1981), p.354-61. The perfectly preserved Temple of Bel at Palmyra offers the most explicit example of a temple's *naos* lit by eight (!) windows, see Seyrig, Amy and Will (1968-75), I, p.36-8, pl.25; II, pl.46-8.

of the temple's inner space. Each of the two long walls of the *naos* features three brackets set in a single row, about 2.50m above the floor level of the *naos* [PLATE XXVII]. Each bracket was set in the centre of a wall section bounded by the attached half-columns. The very existence of such brackets, meant to carry statues, inside the *naos*, is a rare phenomenon, whose only parallel can be found in the temple of Is-Sanamen [PLATE XXI-XXII].[48]

In the roofing of the temple at Mismiyeh four different systems were employed: roofing by means of a dome (the square nave), by using a half dome (the semicircular cult niche of the *adyton*), with barrel vaults (the four isles arranged around the central square nave) and with horizontal stone slabs (the four square–shaped spaces in the corners of the *naos*). The roofing method of the temple cannot but arouse admiration. The simplicity, the originality, the excellent use of a local basalt stone and the spatial solutions, all created an elegant, airy and unobstructed space.

The *naos* of the temple, in its plan and design, invited the public to enter. The three doorways in the entrance wall and its windows made for abundant air and light. The roofing, borne on four columns and eight attached half-columns, formed a spacious and airy interior which was pleasant to enter. The statues, set up on the six brackets attached to the *naos* walls, gave the temple's inner space a dimension of splendor and beauty, while the *adyton*, with the central cult niche roofed by a half-dome, in which the statue of a god must have stood, certainly constituted a clear and emphatic focal point for the temple.

Peripteron

The temple of Helios at Qanawat

The temple of Helios in Qanawat[49] was surveyed and examined by many travelers during the nineteenth century and photographed by T. Dumas as early as 1875. The most accurate plans of the temple were drawn by Butler in 1903 and by Brünnow and von Domaszewski in 1909.[50] A few suggested reconstructions of the temple

[48] On the temple of Tyche at Is-Sanamen, see above, and on the brackets in that temple's *naos*, see above, n.23 and 32.

[49] Cf. Prentice in *PAAES* III (1908), p.317-8, nº407.

[50] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.354-7; Brünnow and von Domaszewski (1909),

were prepared by Ward in 1907.[51] Contrary to many other temples in southern Syria, it remains today in relatively good condition. It was investigated by Freyberger in 1993[52] and new research on the temple has been conducted during the last decade of the twentieth century by C. Ertel.[53]

The temple of Helios is a *peripteron* (6 x 9), set on a 2.50m high rectangular podium [21m x 14.50m], with its entrance wall facing east [PLATE XXIX]. It is a very small temple for a *peripteron*, having no parallel in the Roman Near East, except the temple at Suweida, which is only slightly larger [PLATE XXXI].[54] In the centre of the eastern wall of the podium, there was a narrow flight of steps set between two terminating walls (*antae*). This staircase was placed precisely in front of the central, wide *intercolumnium*, marking the entrance to the naos. The six columns of the eastern colonnade (*pteron*) were set in two groups of three columns each, leaving a wide *intercolumnium* in the centre, to allow an unobstructed view toward the entrance front of the *naos* [PLATE XXIX]. It is plausible to reconstruct, as already suggested by Ward, that the six columns of the *pteron*, placed along the entrance front of the *naos*, carried a 'Syrian pediment'. On the rear, western front, however, the seven columns could have carried a regular, triangular gable.

Two pairs of columns were set between the outer colonnade and the entrance wall of the temple. This additional space created at the entrance front of the temple compensated for lack of the *pronaos*. The columns of the *pteron* were set as follows: nine columns along the long northern and southern walls, six columns along the entrance wall, and seven columns along the rear western wall. The irregularity between the western and the eastern walls can be easily explained: at the entrance front, there was no room for more than six columns

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p.109-15, fig.1001-10. The Dumas Photographic Archive is kept at P.E.F. Central Library and Archive in London.

[51] Ward (1907b).

[52] Freyberger (1993), pl.20-8.

[53] Ertel (2000), pl.39-44.

[54] There is another, even smaller peripteral temple in southern Syria, located at Qasr Nimrud, a remote and uninhabited site on the eastern slopes of the Anti-Lebanon ridge, 22 km southeast of Baalbek. This *peripteron* [16.30m x 10.12m], examined by German scholars before 1914, is, as mentioned above, even smaller than the peripteral temples at Qanawat and at Suweida. Cf. Krencker and Zschietzschmann (1938), p.178-81, pl.71-3; Ball (1994), p.67.

because of the huge *intercolumnium* between the two central columns, but along the other three walls of the *naos,* the columns of the *pteron* were set precisely against the pilasters decorating the walls of the *naos*. All together there were thirty-one columns in the *pteron,* of which seven columns can be seen today *in situ*. All the columns of the *pteron* were set on the 1.60m high, carefully executed square pedestals. Looking at the temple from a distance, one will easily notice an additional phenomenon. On the outer walls of the temple's podium, under each one of the pedestals carrying the columns of the *pteron* a pilaster is jutting out, emphasizing the verticality of the columns on the one hand and creating the light and shadow interplay on the temple's podium walls on the other. Unfluted column shafts were made of drums, set on 'Attic' bases and topped by Corinthian capitals [PLATE XXX].

Suweida

Suweida (ancient Soada or Dionysias Soada) is located in the central Hauran, ca 10 km southwest of Qanawat [PLATE XII].[55] The site was surveyed by many travelers during the nineteenth century.[56] The peripteral temple was examined in detail and photographed by Butler, and by Brünnow and von Domaszewski [PLATE XXXII].[57] Today, very few remains of the temple can be seen, incorporated into a modern building.[58]

The peripteral temple (23m x 21m) is a very peculiar structure indeed, and its very size, plan and features have no parallel among the temples in the Roman Near East, with the exception of the temple of Helios at Qanawat.[59] The rectangular *naos*, its entrance wall facing north, was surrounded by a *pteron* of twenty-five columns, arranged as follows: along each one of the two long walls of the temple stood eight columns [PLATE XXXI]. Along the entrance wall stood six columns and at the rear, southern wall of the temple stood seven. This irregularity in the number of columns set in the north-

[55] Dussaud (1927), p.352; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.124 and p.172; id. (1976), p.52.

[56] De Laborde (1837), p.120, pl.56; De Vogüé (1867), pl.4.

[57] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.327-34, fig.118; Brünnow and von Domaszewski (1909), p.94-6, fig.988-91.

[58] Barcsay-Regner (1991), pl.17-9; Burns (1999), p.226-7.

[59] On the temple of Helios at Qanawat, see above, with n.49-54. For another small *peripteron* located in Syria, at Qasr Nimrud, see above, n.54.

ern and southern fronts of the temple can be easily explained. There was a wide doorway in the northern wall of the *naos*, and in order to allow an unobstructed view from outside towards the *naos*, only six columns could be set there, creating the exceptionally wide *intercolumnia*. All other columns of the *pteron* were set against the pilasters decorating the outer walls of the *naos*. The latter [14.75m x 12.15m] was built of exceptionally smoothly dressed basalt ashlars, without any binding material. The columns were built of five drums each, very slender and tall, their ratio of the height to the diameter being 1:10. The six columns set at the entrance front of the temple were given very rich architectural decoration [PLATE XXXIII]. They were set on 'Attic' bases and were topped by pseudo-Corinthian capitals [PLATE XXXI]. Although the source of inspiration for the capitals is unmistakably floral, it is not the regular acanthus, which is why we prefer to name the capitals 'pseudo-Corinthian' rather than simply 'Corinthian'. What make the columns of this temple even more peculiar are the floral decorations placed above the bases, at the lowest part of the columns' shafts. There is no other temple in the Roman Near East to boast such a decorative element.[60]

As already mentioned, the peripteral temple at Suweida has never been excavated. We lack any epigraphic testimony, and there is no other source of information about the temple's history. Therefore, in attempting to establish the approximate date for the erection of this temple we can rely only on the architectural-typological data. The temple's plan and especially its architectural decoration both hint towards a much earlier date of construction than the other temples examined in this study. In the nearby Nabataean sanctuary of Si', dated to the second half of the first centuries BC and AD, one finds many similar elements clearly recognizable in the peripteral temple at Suweida.[61]

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[60] The 'leaf bases', as they are frequently called, were rather rare as a decorative component in the architecture of the Roman Near East. It may have originated in Hellenistic Egypt, where lotus-like columns are found. But it can be as well regarded as a 'baroque' variation, through repetition, on the Corinthian capital. 'Leaf bases' appear already in the late Hellenistic period, but are more widespread in the second and third centuries AD, especially in the Roman Near East. Cf. Lyttelton (1974), p.58-9, n.57; Segal (1997), p.100, n.45.

[61] On the Nabataean sanctuary at Si', see Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 6 (1916), p.365-402; Dentzer (1985).

An Architectural Analysis of the 'Vitruvian' Temples

Location and orientation

Although none of the eleven 'Vitruvian' temples included in this study was ever excavated, and very few were properly investigated, it seems that most of them were set in compounds which were carefully paved and surrounded by walls and colonnades. Two of these compounds, in Mushennef and Is-Sanamen, were located in the vicinity of pools. The temples were built in the same orientation as the compounds, either on north-south or east-west direction, and facing either north or east.

Plan and general design

As five among the eleven temples studied here were erected in *Distylon in Antis* configuration, it appears as the most popular temple's plan in the region. There are three temples built as *Tetrastylon Prostylon*, two peripteral temples and only one *Hexastylon Prostylon*. It seems that in general small temples, with relatively simple and basic plans, were preferred. The temples are indeed rather small, rarely exceeding 20m in their length. The temple of Zeus at Qanawat [30.50m x 14.20m] is an exception. All the temples, regardless their size and shapes, were built upon imposing podia. The staircases of the podia were set in Roman manner, i.e. only in front of the entrance walls of the temples, in most cases terminated by the *antae*. There were additional staircases inside the temples, placed in the *antae*, as for example in the temple at Slem and the temple of Zeus at Qanawat. Additional spaces, where the stairwells could be set, were the rectangular rooms located on either side of the central semicircular cult niche of the *adyton*. It appears that this was the case in the temples at both Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh, where the inner stairwells were placed in those rooms.

Six of the eleven temples were clearly divided into two main halls, the *pronaos* and the *naos*. In all these temples, one finds only one doorway leading from the *pronaos* towards the *naos*. The two halls were built on the same level, and carefully paved with rectangular stone slabs. In five of the eleven temples, however, there was one hall only, the *naos*. In those temples, as the compensation for the lack of the *pronaos*, there was an additional area stretching between the columns

of the *porticus* and the entrance wall of the temple. The column shafts were made of drums, set on 'Attic' bases and topped by Ionian or Corinthian Capitals. The latter were much more popular than the former. Only in the temple at Mismiyeh, pseudo-Doric capitals were used. Another exception is the temple at Slem. Its columns were topped by the capitals of the composite order, which combines the acanthus leaves of the Corinthian capital with a diagonal Ionic volute above. Pedestals for columns, as an additional decorative element, were widely used, mainly outside the temple, in the *porticus* or the *pteron*, and rather rarely inside the temple.

In four temples only, among the eleven, it is possible to learn about the shape and the design of the *adyta*, the most sacred place in the temple, where the statue of the god stood. The *adyta* were set along and parallel to the wall opposite the entrance wall of the temple. In three temples the central features of the *adyta* were designed as semi-circular cult niches, flanked by rectangular rooms. The cult niches were roofed by half domes. The temple of Zeus in Qanawat is the only one with a rectangular cult niche. In nine cases only one doorway led into the temple. These doorways were always rectangular and roofed by massive, lavishly embellished monolithic lintels resting on richly ornamented doorposts. The doorways were huge in relation to the modest sizes of the temples, allowing plenty of light and air into the temples. Only in the temples at Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh there were triple doorways; the central one of which is higher and wider than the others. In both temples, the height of the two side doorways was half of the central one. The temple at Mismiyeh is the only one we know to have had windows.

The roofing

As most of the temples were relatively small, there were very few problems in roofing. The temple of Zeus in Qanawat and the temple in Mismiyeh were the only ones where the columns were employed in the inner space of the temples in order to support the roof. Furthermore, the temple of Tyche at Is-Sanamen was the only temple in the region where wooden beams might have been used for the roofing. All the other temples were roofed without any use of wood. By simply employing arches, vaults or domes, there was no need at all to use columns or pillars as additional supporters in the inner space of the temples. Basalt stone was the only building mate-

rial used. It appears that the temple in Mismiyeh is the only one among the eleven studied here where the use of cast dome was attempted. The slanting roofs were shaped on their narrow sides, i.e. above the entrance and the rear fronts, either as regular, triangular pediments [gables] or as 'Syrian pediments', i.e. arched ones. The latter was a convenient solution, which allowed spanning the wide *intercolumnia* between the two central columns at the entrance fronts of the temples.

Architectural decoration

As regards the outer space of the temples, their entrance fronts were, naturally, the most decorated areas. The columns of the *porticus* were not only functional, but also decorative elements. Frequently the columns were set upon pedestals. The capitals were mostly Corinthian and rarely Ionian. On the column shafts at the south temple at Atil, one finds brackets meant to carry statues. This is the only temple to be embellished in this peculiar manner. The entablature, either horizontal or arched, was in all the temples the focal point as far as the architectural decoration is concerned. In spite of the fact that all the temples were built with harsh basalt stone, both the geometrical, floral, as well as zoomorphic and anthropomorphic designs excelled in high craftsmanship. The door posts as well as the lintels were embellished with moldings and consoles. On both side of the main doorway one finds rectangular or semicircular niches topped with little gables carried on small attached half columns. These, in turn, were set on corbels (brackets) jutting from the walls. The side and rear walls of the temples were in most cases decorated with pilasters set on attached bases and topped by attached capitals.

As regards the inner space of the temples, our knowledge about the design and decorations is very limited indeed, because most of them were poorly preserved and only very few ever properly examined. Only in three temples we find inner columns. It seems that the architectural decoration in most of the temples was restricted to the walls in general and to the *adyton* wall, i.e. the wall opposite the entrance wall, in particular. The central features in the *adyta* were in most cases semicircular cult niches flanked symmetrically on either side by rectangular rooms. The niches were roofed by half domes, designed on their inner side like a conch. The doorways to the two flanking rooms were located symmetrically on either side of the

niche, facing the *naos*. The door posts and the lintels of the doorways leading to these rooms were lavishly adorned in a similar way, as the doorways to the temple itself. Above the doorways, there were small, rectangular decorative niches arranged symmetrically on both sides of the central doorway. These niches were decorated in a similar way as the niches set in the entrance wall to the temple. In the temple at Is-Sanamen, for example, the four columns carrying the entablature were placed parallel to the *adyton* wall. In Mismiyeh, on the other hand, instead of the free standing columns, there were half columns attached to the *adyton* wall. In both these temples the design of the *adyton* wall in its general appearance was very similar indeed to that of the entrance walls of the temples. The most unusual and intriguing decorative element to be found in the temples under discussion here are the brackets meant to carry statues, set along the two long walls bounding the *naos* halls in the temples at both Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh. In each of them, there were three brackets on each of the two long walls. A statue of a deity was placed in the central cult niche, and six statues were hanging virtually from the *naos* walls. One ought to remember that the *naos* in the temple at Mismiyeh was generously lit from the three doorways and the two windows. This was certainly not a murky, mysterious and uninviting *naos* of an average Graeco-Roman temple. What we see here is a carefully designed space dedicated to mortals, and not to gods. It was a conveniently approachable, beautifully decorated space, where worshipers could gather in front of the *adyton* and perform acts of worship inside the *naos* and not, as usual, outside, in the open and unroofed space of the *temenos*.

Materials and techniques

The basalt stone was the only building material used in this region. It is an extremely strong, reliable and durable material, its only disadvantage being its harshness. The very characteristics of the basalt required great effort and skill in quarrying, cutting and dressing it. All the temples examined here were built entirely in basalt stone in coursed masonry, with meticulously dressed ashlars, without any use of binding, cement-like materials. There is very little use of wood. Actually, there was only one temple, that of Tyche at Is-Sanamen, in which wooden beams for roofing might have been used. All the other ones were roofed with basalt flat and relatively thin slabs laid

on walls' tops on one side and on arches on the other. The very harshness and strength of the basalt stone allowed the use of slabs of 3.50m long. When the span to be roofed was wider, transverse arches were used. Barrel vaults were less frequent, while half domes built of basalt ashlars were used only in the semicircular niches. There is only one instance of using the dome, namely in the temple at Mismiyeh. There, the central part of the *naos* was roofed by a dome cast in cement-like material.

Description of the 'Non-Vitruvian' [*Kalybe*/καλύβη] Temples of the Imperial Cult

Temples with roofed adyton

The temple at Il-Haiyat

The small village of Il-Haiyat is located in the eastern Trachon, the Ledja, 17 km north of Philippopolis [PLATE XII].[62] The temple at Il-Haiyat has been surveyed by several travelers during the nineteenth century. Today nothing remains of the temple, and H.C. Butler's plan, few photographs and reconstruction drawing, published in 1903, are the most accurate testimony of this unique building.[63]

The temple at Il-Haiyat was a rectangular building, with its main entrance, set in one of its longer walls, facing north. Its plan consists of three rooms, almost identical in size, arranged in one row on east-west axis [PLATE XXXIV]. The central room's wide arched entrance opens to the north. This room, roofed by a dome, was two floors high, while the two flanking rooms were divided into two floors each. The doorways to the ground floor rooms were arranged symmetrically on either side of the flight of steps leading to the central room. The rooms on the second floor were lit by windows, placed precisely above the doorways leading to the rooms on the lower floors [PLATE XXXIV]. To reach the rooms on the upper floor, one had to climb one of the two staircases located between the double walls bounding the main room on the east and west sides. The only decorative element in the entrance front of the temple was a semicircular niche roofed by a half dome, set in an a-symmetrical

[62] Dussaud (1927), p.355.
[63] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.394-8, fig.142-3.

manner between the arch of the main entrance and the west window [PLATE XXXIV].

The temple at Umm Iz-Zetun (AD 282)

The small village of Umm Iz-Zetun is situated in the southern Trachon, in the Ledja, ca 10 km north of Philippopolis [PLATE XII].[64] The site was explored for the first time in 1860 by M. de Vogüé, who not only examined the temple, but also read the two Greek inscriptions set into the temple wall, and established when the temple was erected. Furthermore, he was the first scholar to suggest that the Greek term καλύβη, as used in these two inscriptions, means actually a temple for the imperial cult.[65] H.C. Butler managed to locate in both the Trachon and the Hauran an additional four temples which he identified as *Kalybe* temples.[66] Today, we believe, we can identify in the region of the Trachon and the Hauran at least seven temples as so-called *Kalybes*, i.e. temples designated for the imperial cult.[67]

When De Vogüé surveyed the temple at Umm Iz-Zetun, it was still well preserved, but it seems that it was dismantled a few years later. The temple consists of one room roofed by a dome. Its arched entrance is almost as wide as a room itself [PLATE XXXV]. In front of the open room a wide flight of steps secured an easy access to the temple. There were two wings set on either side of the entrance, adding valuable and highly needed space to an otherwise narrow and unimpressive entrance front of the temple. Each of these wings was embellished with the rectangular arched niches set symmetrically on either side of the entrance [PLATE XXXV].

The temple at Shakka

Shakka (ancient Saccaea, known also in the late Roman Period as Maximianopolis) is located in the southern Trachon, 14 km east of Philippopolis [PLATE XII].[68] The temple has been surveyed by many travelers during the nineteenth century, but it was dismantled

[64] Dussaud (1927), p.361 and p.379. Garret in *PAAES* I (1914), p.127.
[65] De Vogüé (1867), p.41-3, pl.VI.
[66] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.396.
[67] See Segal (2001).
[68] Dussaud (1927), p.367; Avi-Yonah (1966), p.171; id. (1976), p.92; Burns (1999), p.224.

early in the twentieth century, and nothing of it can be seen today. The temple at Shakka is very similar to that at Umm Iz-Zetun, and De Vogüé included it in his original list of *Kalybe* temples.[69] The *Kalybe* at Shakka is a rectangular building [PLATE XXXVI]. In the entrance wall of the temple was a wide arched opening, with a rectangular platform in front of it, as wide as the building itself. The temple's floor and the platform were on the same level. One could reach the platform from the outside through the flight of steps placed in the middle of the platform and on the same, central axis with the temple. Both the platform and the temple were built upon huge, barrel vaults set in a parallel to each other, one vault under the platform in front of the temple, and another one under the temple itself. It seems that the temple was roofed by a dome set on the walls as well as on the four stone slabs (squinches) placed diagonally at the four corners of the square temple's hall. On either side of the temple's entrance short walls were erected, one wall on each side, decorated with a pair of rectangular niches, arranged one upon another on either of the walls. The niches, as well as the four brackets, set symmetrically between the wide entrance and the upper niches, could accommodate statues, creating an impressive and grandeur look for the otherwise modest and relatively plain structure [PLATE XXXVI].[70]

Temples with unroofed naos, half-domed adyton and porticus

The Hexastyle temple at Philippopolis (AD 244-249)

Philippopolis, today the small town of Shuhba, is located in the southern Trachon, the Ledja [PLATE XII].[71] Its short history is well documented. It was refounded in AD 244 by Philip 'the Arab', but was never completed, as Philip was assassinated in the fifth year of his rule.[72] Among the buildings erected were a theatre, a mausoleum, a palace and the imperial bath complex, as well as two temples [PLATE XXXVII]. When Butler visited Shuhba in 1898, he investigated the two temples and called the one located close to the

[69] De Vogüé (1867), p.41-3; Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.396-7, fig.140-1.
[70] See above, n.23 and 32, and below, n.79.
[71] Dussaud (1927), p.360, p.363 and p.368; Burns (1999), p.220-3.
[72] Avi-Yonah (1966), p.117; id. (1976), p.88; Bowersock (1983); Shahid (1984); Körner (2002); Sommer (2004a), p.39-42.

palace a *Kalybe*, while he named the second one, situated to the east of the palace, the 'Hexastyle temple'.[73] The latter, contrary to the *Kalybe*, was in very poor state of preservation already then. This Hexastyle temple, almost square in its plan [ca 18m x 17m] was erected to the north of the *decumanus maximus*, about 50m west from the intersection between the two main colonnaded streets of the city [PLATE XXXVII].[74]

The temple's entrance front was set parallel to the street, facing south. When Butler examined the temple in 1898, four of the original six columns in its *porticus* were still in place. Those four columns can still be seen today.[75] The unfluted column shafts, made of drums, were set on 'Attic' bases, which in turn were placed on 0.75m high pedestals and were topped by Corinthian capitals [PLATE XXXVIII]. The temple consisted of one huge room, the *naos*, opened to the south, where the *porticus* stood. Its north wall was exceptionally thick (4m), in order to accommodate a huge, semicircular cult niche, roofed by a half dome, which must have been the *adyton*. Two thick diagonal walls set symmetrically on either side of the central niche were decorated with smaller niches, three in each of the two walls. From the east and the west, the temple was bounded by two parallel, 8m long walls, stretching from the *porticus* towards the two diagonal walls set on either side of the central cult niche. It appears that the *naos* was left unroofed, while the huge, central cult niche must have been roofed, as suggested already by a half dome, thus emphasizing the symmetrical, axial and frontal arrangement of the temple [PLATE XXXVIII]. This sort of open building reminded one, especially from the outside, of a traditional, *hexastylon-prostylon* temple. However, after passing through the *porticus* one found oneself in a peculiar unroofed space, designed as a courtyard, and progressing into the temple one was confronted by an impressive semicircular cult niche, in which the statue of the emperor must have stood [PLATE XXXVIII].

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[73] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.378-80 (no measurements of the temple are given).

[74] For the town planning and architecture in Philippopolis, see Segal (1988), p.83-7, fig.154-6; id. (1997), p.55-7, fig.55-7.

[75] Freyberger (1992), pl.64a-b.

The so-called Seraya temple (C) at Qanawat

Temple C, as it is commonly called today, is a Roman temple incorporated into a huge Byzantine religious complex [PLATE XXXIX].[76] Many of its original features were preserved in the later buildings, enabling a reconstruction of its original plan. Temple C was surveyed, drawn and photographed by many scholars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Butler, who surveyed it in 1898, called it a 'temple-like' structure.[77] In the two last decades of the twentieth century, it was partially restored by the Syrian Department of Antiquities.[78] Temple C is a rectangular building, with its entrance, designed as *tetrastylon in antis*, facing north [PLATE XL]. The southern wall of the temple is exceptionally thick (6.50m), in order to accommodate a huge semicircular cult niche [diameter: 6m]. The inner face of the central niche was decorated with three smaller niches, arranged symmetrically as follows: a slightly bigger one in the centre, flanked on either side by smaller ones. It is plausible to assume that the central cult niche was roofed with a half dome and functioned as an *adyton* [PLATE XLI]. On either side of the central niche were two rectangular rooms, one room on each side, their entrances facing north, towards the *naos*. The purpose of the eastern room is unclear, while the western one, so it appears, served as a stairwell.

As the *naos* [21m x 16m] was left unroofed, it must have functioned as a courtyard, where the worshipers would gather in front of the *adyton*. This courtyard was terminated on both its east and west sides by plain walls, opening to the north, where the *porticus* of four columns stood. The columns were stretching between the two *antae*. The latter were decorated on their inner sides with attached half columns, topped by Corinthian half capitals [fig. 30]. The unfluted columns shafts made of drums were set on pedestals and topped by Corinthian capitals. To approach the *porticus* of the temple from outside, one had to climb a flight of steps as wide as the *porticus* itself. The unique feature of the *porticus* of temple C are the brackets, one on each of the four columns shafts of the *porticus* [PLATES XXXIX,XLI]. The brackets, set about 3m above the floor level,

[76] Amer e.a. (1982).

[77] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.357-61. For research conducted at Qanawat before 1900, see Brünnow and von Domaszewski (1909), p.118-32, fig.1014-27.

[78] Burns (1999), p.167-7, fig.51.

could carry statues [PLATE XLI]. The brackets jutting from the columns shafts and carrying statues, were not uncommon features along the colonnaded streets in the Roman Near East, but were extremely rare in temples.[79]

Open exedra *temples*

The Kalybe temple at Philippopolis (AD 244-9)

The *Kalybe* at Philippopolis is surprisingly well preserved [PLATE XLII].[80] It has been examined by many travelers and scholars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[81] During the two last decades of the twentieth century it has been partially restored by the Syrian Department of Antiquities.[82] The *Kalybe* was built as a part of a huge complex, which could have been a palace of Philip the Arab himself [PLATE XXXVII]. The main front of the building is facing an open, paved piazza stretching east. It is plausible to assume that this piazza was the *agora* or *forum* of the city [PLATE XXXVII]. Only by standing in the piazza and looking west, one can estimate the sheer scale of the *Kalybe*, which in its plan, design and features reminds us of a typical *scaenae frons* of the Roman theatre.[83]

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[79] Brackets for supporting statues, unlike those intended to carry entablature, arches or vaults, are rare in Classical architecture in the West, and are widespread mainly in Syria. On the columns along the colonnaded streets of Palmyra or Apamea were such supports meant to carry statues, see Segal (1997), p.47-52, fig.49-51. The only colonnaded street embellished with brackets to support sculptures to be found out of Syria is the main colonnaded street in Pompeiopolis (Cilicia), see Peschlow-Bindokat (1975), pl.71-82. It was most rare to find brackets set in the *porticus*' columns in the temples. In all six of the *porticus*' columns of the temple of Baal-Shamin at Palmyra were brackets to carry statues, see Collart and Vicari (1969). In the Hauran and the Trachon we find them in two other temples; the southern temple at Atil, see above, with n.20-4, and the *Kalybe* at Shakka, see above, with n.68-70.

[80] Segal (1988), p.83-7, fig.154-6; id. (1997), p.55-7, fig.55-7.

[81] Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.382-4, fig.133.

[82] Amer and Gawlikowski (1985), pl.1-2; Freyberger (1999).

[83] On the significance and development of the *scaenae frons* in the Roman theatres, see Bieber (1961), p.190-207, fig.674,676; Ward-Perkins (1981), p.380, fig.249. For the additional possible source of inspiration for the theatre-like fronts of the *Kalybe* temples, one can look at the 'imperial hall' ('Kaisersaal' or 'Marmorsaal'). These imperial halls, richly decorated in a *scaenae frons* manner, were, among other functions, used for the imperial cult. Imperial halls functioned as the main halls in the bath-gymnasium complexes which were built in tens of cities of Asia Minor. Cf. ibid., p.291-9, fig.190-1; Yegül (1982); id. (1992), p.250-313. An additional possible source of inspiration for these open, exedra-like structures may have been the *Septizodium*, which was erected in AD 203 by Septimius Severus at the foot of

The *Kalybe* in Philippopolis is a huge open structure, still towering to its original height of three floors. In order to approach it, one had to climb the wide flight of steps stretching along the entire front of the building [30m!] and facing the piazza. Having done so, one found himself in a rectangular, carefully paved area, terminated on its west side, along the entire main front of the *Kalybe*, by a 1.50m high wall, its face adorned alternatively with square and semicircular niches [fig.31-2]. Precisely this kind of a wall, called *proscaenium*, adorns the *pulpitum* (stage-) front in every Roman theatre, separating it from the *orchestra*.[84] In the very centre of its wide, 30m long front, facing the piazza, is a huge semicircular cult niche, roofed by a half dome. On either side of the central cult niche are diagonal walls. In each one of these diagonal walls there is an arched doorway leading to a room [PLATE XLIII]. Again, the central niche and the two side entrances flanking it remind us of the three entrances (the *aula regia* and the two *hospitalia*) set in the *scaenae frons* of a Roman theatre.[85] Two parallel walls stretching from the diagonal ones towards the *agora* or *forum* terminate the entire structure, creating a very rigid symmetrical, frontal and axial building [PLATES XLIII-XLIV]. All the walls were embellished with rectangular or semicircular niches and free standing columns placed on the brackets on either side of the niches. Almost nothing remains today of the columns and pilasters that were arranged in three floors set one above the other, and carrying the entablature. The niches must have carried statues, and it is reasonable to assume that in the central niche, whose diameter was 6m, stood the statue of the emperor himself [PLATE XLIV]. The

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his new palace built on the Palatine Hill. The plan of the *Septizodium* was preserved on a contemporary map of Rome, the *Forma Urbis Romae*. The *Septizodium* was dismantled in 1588, but before this occurred it was sketched by several artists, among them M. van Heemskerk (1532-6) and S. Du Pérac (1575). The main feature of this monumental structure (93m long, 31.50m high, but only 11.50m wide) was a solid wall, decorated by three similarly designed semicircular niches. In the central one stood an 8m high statue of the emperor. Short walls, against the broad façade wall, bounded the structure one at each side. Parallel to the façade wall, on its three niches, were three stories of sets of columns, one above the other, separated by entablatures. One may assume that the walls of the building were covered with colorful marble panels and embellished with sculptures. Cf. Crema (1959), p.545, fig.718-9; Boëthius and Ward-Perkins (1970), p.273, pl.143; Gros (1996), p.432-4, fig.488-90; Stenuit (2003), p.33-5, fig.1,4,5,7.

[84] See, e.g., the *proscaenium* at the Augustan theatre at Leptis-Magna, see Caputo (1987), I, fig.136.

[85] Bieber (1961), p.202-9, fig.689-90,694-9.

Kalybe at Philippopolis was built of meticulously dressed ashlars, except the half dome which was cast in cement-like material mixed with rubble. The architectural decoration and the statues must have been executed in marble.[86]

The Kalybe temple at Bostra

Following the annexation of the Nabataean Kingdom by Rome in AD 106, Bostra became a capital city of Arabia, the new Roman province stretching east of Judaea and south of Syria.[87] Bostra's fortifications, colonnaded streets, entertainment structures such as an amphitheatre, circus, and theatre, as well as decorative buildings such as the *nymphaeum,* and the *tetrakionion*, were erected during the second and the third centuries AD. The city has been surveyed by many European and American scholars during the nineteenth century. W.J. Bankes and C. Barry were the first in 1819 to prepare a few very accurate drawings of Bostra's ancient buildings, among them the *Kalybe*. Those early drawings are of great importance, as since 1819 some parts of the *Kalybe* have collapsed or were dismantled. H.C. Butler, who investigated Bostra in the first decade of the twentieth century, managed to produce a schematic, conjectural plan of the building [PLATE XLVI].[88] The *Kalybe* temple was erected in the very centre of the city, at the intersection of the two main colonnaded streets. Its 24.60m wide main front is facing the *cardo*. Across the street, positioned diagonally to the *Kalybe*, stood the *nymphaeum* [PLATES XLV-XLVI].

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[86] Most of the sculptures which were found in various sites in the Trachon and the Hauran areas were made of local, basalt stone, see Butler in *PAAES* II (1903), p.414-22; Dunand (1934), pl.XVIII,XX-XXI,XXIII; Dentzer-Feydy (1986); ead. (1992). However, in the Decapolis cities, such as Scythopolis or Gadara, located in close vicinity to the Trachon and the Hauran, the situation is different. Tens of statues and architectural fragments such as columns, capitals and segment of entablature made of various marbles, were found there. It clearly indicates that, in spite of the fact that almost all the buildings there were constructed in local basalt stone, at least some parts of the architectural decorations in those wealthy and important centers, as well as the sculptures placed in the most prestigious buildings, were made of marbles. Cf. Skupinska-Løvset (1983); Vito (1991); Förster and Tsafrir (1992), fig.9-15; Tsafrir and Förster (1997), fig.37- 41; Skupinska-Løvset (1999).

[87] Cerulli (1978); Miller (1983); Sartre (1985), p.88-152; Segal (1988), p.101-48; id. (1997), p.22-7 and p.68-71; Freyberger (1989a); Foss (1995); Burns (1999), p.62-9.

[88] Butler in *PUAES* II.A, part 4 (1914), p.252-5, fig.225-6.

The main feature of the *Kalybe*'s main front was a semicircular cult niche (diameter ca 6m), flanked by diagonal walls. In each one of these walls was an entrance. Two short walls, parallel to the *cardo*, were attached to the diagonal ones, one wall on each side. The *Kalybe*'s main front was terminated on both sides by short walls [*antae*] jutting at the right angle from its main front. Opposite to each one of these two jutting walls stood a column, placed at the distance of 2.70m from the wall. The columns were carrying architraves jutting from the *Kalybe*'s terminating walls. The column shafts made of drums were elevated upon the pedestals and topped by beautifully executed Corinthian capitals. The two columns were exceptionally tall and slender, reaching together with the pedestal and the capital the astonishing height of 16m [PLATES XLV, XLVII]. The unprecedented ratio of the diameter to the column height was 1:13. I am not aware of any other building in the Graeco-Roman world in which such a ratio has been ever employed. The plan, size and design, as well as the architectural decoration, of the *Kalybe* at Bostra are very similar to the *Kalybe* at Philippopolis [PLATES XLIV, XLVII]. Both structures were positioned in the most prestigious sites, towering three or even four stories above the street level. Both were clearly designed to impress and to draw attention. The building standards and materials, as well as the highest quality of architectural decorations, attest to the great attention and efforts invested in erecting the two *Kalybe* temples.

An Architectural Analysis of the 'Non-vitruvian' (Kalybe) Temples

The seven *Kalybe* temples as described in this study are not a homogeneous group. All seven were erected in a relatively small area in the Trachon and the Hauran, measuring ca 45 km from north to south and ca 20 km from east to west. In this area the only easily available building material was basalt stone, so it is not surprising that all the temples were built with this material. As regards their chronology, it seems plausible to assume that all seven were erected in the mid-third century, or, if to be more precise, in the second half of the third century. The *Kalybe* at Umm Iz-Zetun is the only among them that can be precisely dated (to AD 282) thanks to inscriptions. The two temples in Philippopolis must have been erected between AD 244-

9, and it is plausible to assume that the *Kalybe* at Bostra should be dated to more or less the same time. The dating of the temples at Qanawat, Shakka and Il-Haiyat, is more problematic and less certain, as we depend here entirely on architectural-typological analysis. Finally, it should also be mentioned that five of them were located in cities and two in villages. The seven *Kalybes* can by divided into three distinctive sub-categories, according to their plans and general design.

First, temples with roofed *adyton*. The temples at buildings at Il-Haiyat, Umm Iz-Zetun and Shakka belong in this category. In each, the *adyton* is designed as a square room roofed by a dome. The entrance to the *adyton* is very wide, with a comfortable flight of steps leading to it. The axiality and frontality of the temple is emphasized by the wings or short walls located on either side of the centrally placed *adyton*.

Second, temples with unroofed *naos*, half-domed *adyton* and *porticus*. There are only two temples belonging to this category: the Hexastyle Temple at Philippopolis and Temple C at Qanawat. The *adyta* in those temples are designed as semicircular cult niches roofed by half domes and flanked by rectangular rooms. The *naos* is an open, unroofed space, approached through a wide *porticus* set opposite the *adyton*. This sub-category could be called the transitional one, as it still preserved some elements of a traditional, classical temple, but simultaneously introduced new ideas such as an open, unroofed space inside the temple (the *naos*) for people to gather in front of an open and conveniently approachable *adyton*.

Third, open air *exedra* temples. The *Kalybe* temples at Bostra and Philippopolis belong to this category. They are the most impressive and imposing of all the *Kalybe* temples. They are distinctively remote from the traditional classical temples, retaining actually nothing of the architectural vocabulary of forms of a religious edifice. There is nothing to mark the clear distinction between the secular and the sacred, as the *Kalybe* temple is facing directly the piazza or a colonnaded street, with its centrally set semicircular cult niche. The message is clear and nothing is concealed, as nothing separates a passer-by walking along the street from the huge statue of the emperor placed ostentatiously in the centre of an impressive architectural frame, directly facing the street.

Contrary to the regular, traditional temples dedicated to the gods, the *Kalybe* temples were not located in religious compounds separated from the secular areas of the cities by a wall or a fence, but were directly facing the most populous and busy piazzas and streets with their open fronts. The cult niches in which the emperors' statues stood were widely open, clearly visible and easily approachable. Every possible effort was made to highlight those statues by creating the theatre-like scenery, focusing on the central cult niche where the statue of the emperor was placed. Thus, it is not a coincidence that the two *Kalybe* temples in Philippopolis and Bostra remind us so much of the *scaenae frons* structures that one finds in every Roman theatre. Such an imposing structure, three or even four stories high, its front lavishly decorated with columns, pillars and pilasters, as well as with niches of varied sizes and shapes carrying statues, could indeed function as a perfect background for the imperial cult.

Concluding Remarks

The temples under discussion in this study, both the 'Vitruvian' and the 'non-Vitruvian' ones, were examined here mainly according to the typological and architectural criteria. All the temples were built of the same material and were erected within a relatively small area of the Trachon and the Hauran. As to the chronological framework, it seems that the 'Vitruvian' temples were in general built earlier, almost all of them in the second half of the second century AD, while the 'non-Vitruvian' temples were erected later, as most of them clearly belong to the second half of the third century AD. All the 'Vitruvian' temples were dedicated to gods, while all the 'non-Vitruvian' temples functioned as temples for the imperial cult. This clear and sharp division is very puzzling indeed. We are familiar with many temples for the imperial cult built in Italy and the provinces during more than two hundreds years, beginning with the days of Augustus. These, however, apart of being dedicated to the imperial cult and not to Olympian gods, do not differ in their plans and architectural designs from other temples.[89]

[89] Caesar was the first in whose honour a temple was erected in the *Forum Romanum*, see Crema (1959), p.174-5, fig.168; Nash (1968), p.512-4, fig.630-3. Temples for the imperial cult were erected during the first three centuries AD in Rome

Why is the situation different in the Trachon and the Hauran? Was it a need for more direct and unobstructed visual and emotional contact between the subject and the ruler? Even if we assume that that was indeed the case with the *Kalybe* temples, we should keep in mind that the tendency of making the temple more accessible to the worshippers is already demonstrated in the plans and designs of the temples at both Is-Sanamen and Mismiyeh, which were dedicated to traditional gods. The plans and designs of these two temples leave no doubts that the worshippers were supposed to enter the *naos*, and not remain outside in the *temenos*. It seems that we cannot escape the conclusion that the plans and designs of at least a few of the 'Vitruvian' temples examined in this study hint at a fundamental and meaningful change into the relationships between gods and humans,

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itself, but they were primarily widespread in the provinces. The cities saw to the erection of these temples and concerned themselves with regular worship in them, as a proper expression of their loyalty. A study of tens of these temples does not indicate anything that differentiated them from the temples erected to the various gods. Naturally, we can present here only a few examples of the temples for the imperial cult built in Italy and the provinces, ranging from Augustus to Septimius Severus. Temple for Augustus in Vienne, southern France, see: Crema (1959), p.176, fig.171; Kähler (1970), p.37, fig.41; temple for Augustus in Pola, Croatia, see ibid, p.38, fig.41; Pavan (2000); temple for Augustus in Ankara, see Krencker and Schede (1936); temple for Vespasian at the foot of the *Tabularium* on the forum in Rome, see Nash (1968), p.501-14, fig.1320-3; temple for Trajan in Rome, see ibid, p.450-6, fig.547-57; Packer (1994), p.131-5; temple for Trajan on the Acropolis of Pergamon, see Akurgal (1978), p.82, pl.32; temple for Hadrian at the Campus Martius in Rome, see Nash (1968), p.457-61, fig.558-67; temple for Septimius Severus in the new forum at Leptis Magna, see Boëthius and Ward-Perkins (1970), p.476-9, fig.177-8; Ward-Perkins (1993), p.31-54, fig.14-23, pl.20-2. There is, however, a very intriguing exception in this otherwise homogenous picture. A glance at the A*ugusteum*, excavated and partially reconstructed by Italian archaeologists in the *agora* at Cyrene, shows that this is a very different temple compared to those listed above. The plan of that temple is difficult to define according to Vitruvian parameters. At the first glance one may think that it is a peripteral building. However, it is not, as there are no columns at the rear wall of the building. Instead, there is a solid, plain wall. The columns therefore stand along the two long sides and at the entrance wall of the temple. Furthermore, in the four *intercolumnia* stretching along the long sides, counting from the rear wall of the temple, two meters high partition walls were built, creating, as mentioned above, an illusion that what we have here is rather a temple and not an open *exedra*. The *Augusteum* in Cyrene is indeed much more similar to the *Kalybe* temples in southern Syria than those shrines listed above. It is an open, easily approachable temple, conveniently located and facing the main public square of the city. Its *Hexastylon-Prostylon* entrance front is easily accessible from the *agora* and is indeed in its character very much like the *Kalybe* temples in Philippopolis or Bostra. On Cyrene in general, see White (1976). On its *Augusteum*, see Stucchi (1967), p.70-2, fig.31,34-5; id. (1965), p.207-17, fig.131-2, pl.t; Ensoli (2000).

and thus call for rethinking the very idea of the temple in this part of the Graeco-Roman world. Both the plans and the designs of these temples point at a relationship between the *temenos* and the temple itself which is different from temples elsewhere in the Classical world. In other words, the inner space of the temple, the *naos*, is not restricted solely to the deity. On the contrary, it is designed as an inviting, conveniently approachable, beautifully decorated and generously lit space to allow the worshippers to gather in the *naos* in front of the *adyton*. The latter occupies only a very limited area parallel to the inner side of the wall opposite the entrance wall. Naturally, the very scope and character of this study is limited to architecture, but it is to be hoped that this architectural study will initiate and encourage further research on different aspects of the temples in the basalt lands.

ARTEMIS AND ZEUS OLYMPIOS IN ROMAN GERASA AND SELEUCID RELIGIOUS POLICY[1]

ACHIM LICHTENBERGER

The Topography of the Two Sanctuaries

The well-known Roman city of Gerasa in the Decapolis (in present day Jordan) was dominated by two large sanctuaries: the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios and the sanctuary of Artemis [PLATE XLVIII].[2] Both temples occupied prominent positions in the city. While the Artemision was located in the city centre at the main thoroughfare (the *cardo*), the Olympieion was situated on a terrace at the southern end of the Roman city. As the latter did not fit into the overall orthogonal plan of the Roman city, the Oval Forum (southwest of the Olympieion) had—in terms of city planning—an integrating function. However, this slightly peripheral position of the Olympieion was not the original one: the sanctuary of Zeus lies exactly opposite the so-called Camp Hill, on which—as far as we know—the Hellenistic settlement of the city developed.[3] Thus, originally, the Olympieion had been a sanctuary that was placed closely to the central settlement, while the later place of the Roman Artemision was off the centre, or even outside the city. Only with the expansion of the settlement towards the north, the place of the Artemision was pushed into the very centre.

[1] This article was written while I was a Feodor-Lynen-Fellow at Cambridge University in 2003/04. I am grateful for the grant by the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Foundation and for a Visiting Fellowship by Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

[2] For the topography and archaeology of Gerasa, see Kraeling (1938); Browning (1982); Seigne (1982) and (2002); Lichtenberger (2003), p.191-5 (with further literature). On the term Decapolis, see ibid., p.6-20. For deities and cults in the Decapolis see now also the dissertation by Riedl (2003), cf. http://www.diss.fu-berlin.de/2005/155/.

[3] Cf. Kraeling (1938), p.30-1.

Zeus Olympios

We know from inscriptions (starting in the early first century AD) that Zeus Olympios was worshipped in the temple in the southern part of the city [PLATE XLIX].[4] Zeus Olympios, the god of Mt Olympus, had his most famous sanctuary in Olympia in Greece. His cult statue was made by Phidias in the fifth century BC.[5] It was the most famous cult statue of Zeus in Antiquity, and showed the god seated with beard, Nike and a sceptre. In the second century BC, under the Seleucid king Antiochos IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC), Zeus Olympios gained importance as dynastic cult of the Seleucids, and the cult of Zeus Olympios seems to have been introduced in some cities of the vast empire .[6] The statue of the Seleucid Zeus Olympios [PLATE L] was modelled on the famous Zeus Olympios of Phidias.[7]

Gerasa was also refounded under the Seleucids and received, as is attested by inscriptions and coins, the name 'Antioch by the Chrysorrhoas, the former Gerasa'.[8] With the battle at the Paneion (near the source of the Jordan) in 200 BC, Antiochos III (223-187 BC) brought southern Syria under Seleucid control,[9] and sometime in the second century BC the refoundation of Gerasa probably took place.[10] We do not know under which king Gerasa was founded, but the local cult of Zeus Olympios might hint at Antiochos IV. In Gerasa the cult of Zeus Olympios fits well with the name of the city (Antioch) and the position of the temple close to the Hellenistic settlement on Camp Hill. It is fairly likely that Zeus Olympios was the god of 'Antioch by the Chrysorrhoas, the former Gerasa'. But the full name of the city also shows that, apart from 'Antioch', there

[4] For the inscriptions, see Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.373-8 n^{os}2-7; p.379-80 n^{o}10; p.381-2 n^{os}13-4. Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.209-11 with n.1883.

[5] On the Zeus of Phidias in Olympia, see Richter (1966).

[6] E.g. Seyrig (1939); Mørkholm (1963), p.58-74; id. (1966), p.122-33; Bunge (1974), p.78-9; Tölle-Kastenbein (1994), p.143-5; Lichtenberger (2003), p.279 n.1, and p.341 n.271.

[7] Cf. Maderna (1988), p.28-30.

[8] For the name, see Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.390-1 n^{o}30, p.401-2 n^{os}56-8, p.406-7 n^{o}69, p.424-5 n^{os}143-5(?), p.426 n^{o}147, p.428 n^{o}153(?); Seyrig (1950), p.33 n.45; Spijkerman (1978), p.300-1; Lichtenberger (2003), p.192.

[9] Sartre (2001), p.200-1.

[10] On the Seleucid city foundations and settlements in Jordan, see now Thiel (2003), p.225-9.

must have existed a 'Gerasa'. It is significant in this respect that 'Gerasa' is a Semitic name, that is attested in a Nabataean inscription of the first century BC as 'Garshu'.[11]

On the terrace in Gerasa, the earliest archaeological evidence for a cult of Zeus Olympios stems, according to the excavator J. Seigne, from the second century BC. Seigne claimed to have found, at the place of the later temple of Zeus Olympios, an Iron Age cave sanctuary. From this he suggested a continuity of cult into the second century BC. Unfortunately, Seigne did not yet publish his evidence, but it is doubtful whether it is possible to make this connection: the Iron Age finds which he mentioned in his publications end in the seventh/sixth century BC,[12] and from there we have a too large gap of settlement until the second century BC. It is more likely, therefore, that the Iron Age finds are traces of an earlier settlement that has nothing to do with the Hellenistic one and with the cult of Zeus Olympios.

Since it is usually assumed that the introduction of the cult of Zeus Olympios by the Seleucids was a far-reaching and well-planned measure of religious policy, it is of major importance to know whether there was at Gerasa a pre-Hellenistic cult of a Zeus-like god, who in Hellenistic times could have become the cult of Zeus Olympios. It is generally supposed that the cult of Zeus Olympios substituted, through *interpretatio Graeca*, the cults of ancient oriental sky and weather gods, and that the new cult of Zeus Olympios, the highest Greek god, had a uniting effect for the Seleucid kingdom.[13] By this we would have a well-planned action with the goal of fusion (*Verschmelzung*, to use Droysen's term) of East and West.[14] Although this model of Hellenistic culture as such a mixed culture has been disputed in the last decades and is probably not followed any longer,[15] the approach to regard Zeus Olympios as the *interpretatio Graeca* of older gods usually remains untouched from this criticism. However, this view finds no support in the evidence from Gerasa: here we do

[11] Starcky (1965), p.95-6.

[12] Seigne (1997), p.995; id. (2002), p.13.

[13] For Gerasa, see e.g. Kraeling (1938), p.28 and p.31-2; Freyberger (1998), p.29. In general, see Bickermann (1937), p.94-6; Rostovtzeff (1939), p.294-5; Seyrig (1939), p.300; Sourdel (1952), p.19; Tscherikower (1959), p.181-2; Mastrocinque (2002), p.361.

[14] Cf. Bäbler (1999), p.1005.

[15] On the discussion, see Schuler (1999), p.131-2.

not have proof for continuity from a pre-Hellenistic highest god to Zeus Olympios, and in the following it is argued that this model probably does not work for other places either.

First, let us return to Gerasa. The oldest temple architecture of a cult of Zeus stems from the early first century BC.[16] At this time a small and probably rectangular *naos* with lavish stucco and architectural decoration was erected on the terrace. In AD 27/8 we hear of the completion of a large courtyard with an altar on the terrace. A large temple building, a prostyle peripteros, was build only in AD 163/4, orientated towards the courtyard with the old altar. Recently, dining-rooms have been found behind the temple building, which probably served for banquets.[17] Under Domitian a theatre was built close to the temple.[18] It probably functioned not only for civic, but also for cultic purposes of the Zeus-cult, as was the case in other places in the Near East.[19] There is only very little evidence for a female partner, a *parhedra*, of Zeus Olympios in Gerasa. We have no evidence that Hera, the Greek wife of Zeus, was worshipped together with Zeus Olympios in Gerasa. Only in one inscription, a goddess is mentioned in connection with Zeus. It is Tyche and the relevant inscription from the mid-second century AD states: Διὶ Ὀλυμπίῳ σωτῆρι καὶ Τύ[χῃ].[20] If the reconstruction of the last word is correct, we have to take into account that in Gerasa, the cult of the city goddess Tyche was somehow connected with Zeus Olympios.

Artemis of Gerasa

The cult of Artemis in the sanctuary-complex in the centre of the city [PLATE LI] can—like the one of Zeus—be established through inscriptions, which have been found in its vicinity and which mention the goddess.[21] The earliest inscriptions stem from the second half of the first century AD. The large sanctuary was probably built

[16] For the building history of the temple of Zeus in what follows, see Seigne (1997) and (2002).

[17] Cf. Egan and Bikai (1998), p.598.

[18] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.398-9 n°51; Segal (1995), p.75-7.

[19] See now Nielsen (2002), p.39-59 and p.237-59.

[20] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.381 n°13.

[21] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.388-91 n^{os}27-32; Gatier (1985), p.308-12 n^{os}2-3; Gatier (1988), p.151-4 n°5.

at that time, but it will have been completed only in the later second century.[22] This is attested by building inscriptions and the architectural decoration.[23] Once it had been completed, it was a temple-complex that could be reached through an elaborate Propylon building at the eastern side of the *cardo* and through another Propylon-stairs-complex to the west of the street. First one came to a forecourt and from there through another large staircase and another Propylon to the temple forecourt proper. This forecourt was surrounded by columns, with a hexastyle peripteros on a podium in its centre. In front of the temple an altar was placed. A theatre was built close to the Artemision, also in the second half of the second century AD.[24]

Artemis was a Greek goddess of nature and a goddess of transition and initiation. In Asia Minor and in the Near East, she was often identified with local indigenous goddesses.[25] The most famous example is the Artemis of Ephesos, a Hellenized Anatolian goddess.[26] As the epithets of Artemis in Gerasene inscriptions are unusual for the Greek goddess, but hint at her Semitic origin instead, a similar *interpretatio Graeca* seems to have been the case in Gerasa. For example, we find epithets like *Thea Patroa Artemis*,[27] *Artemis Kyria*,[28] *Thea Artemis*,[29] or *Kyria Urania Artemis*.[30] In the Near East all these epithets are well-attested for local gods with non-Greek Semitic origin.[31] The difference between Artemis and Zeus Olympios, who has no such epithets, becomes obvious. Zeus Olympios is always called just Zeus Olympios and there is no other name for him that would hint at a Near Eastern background or origin.[32] If Artemis had been as Greek as Zeus Olympios, we would have to explain her Gerasene

[22] On the building history of the Artemision, see Fisher in Kraeling (1938), p.125-38; Parapetti (2002). For further literature, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.193 n.1696.

[23] On the architectural decoration, see Bloedhorn (1993), p.46.

[24] Segal (1995), p.72-4.

[25] Cf. Augé and Linant de Bellefonds (1984).

[26] Cf. Fleischer (1973).

[27] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.388-9 n°27.

[28] Ibid., p.389-90 n^{os}28-29; Gatier (1985), p.310-2 n°3.

[29] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.391 n°32.

[30] Gatier (1988), p.151-4 n°5.

[31] See Lichtenberger (2003), p.202 with further literature.

[32] The only other epithets for Zeus Olympios are *Phyxios* and *Soter*. On *Phyxios* in Gerasa, see now Rigsby (2000).

epithets by assuming a local contamination. But as we do not find such epithets for Zeus Olympios, such a contamination of Artemis seems unlikely. If we look for possible partners of Artemis, we also find some indication for a Near Eastern origin of the goddess. Though there is no inscription which mentions Artemis with a partner, there are small finds (terracotta plates), sculptures (altars) and inscriptions which refer to Artemis and which hint at the fact that she had a solar sky-god as her partner.[33] Unfortunately, it is not possible to establish exactly which ancient Near Eastern goddess was interpreted as Greek Artemis, but it is likely that she should be sought among goddesses like the Syro-Phoenician Astarte or Atargatis-Dea Syria.[34]

The Numismatic Evidence for Zeus Olympios and Artemis Compared to the Architectural and Epigraphic Evidence

Civic coins in the Roman East, so-called 'Greek imperial' (or 'Roman provincial') coins, are an invaluable source for local history and cultural conditions of cities in the East, as they often depict local themes.[35] In Gerasa civic coinage starts (as far as our evidence is concerned) in AD 67-8 and ends, as in most cities of the region, in the third century AD under the emperor Elagabalus.[36] Artemis is depicted throughout this period on civic coinage and she is found on different denominations and types.[37] Thus we can see the goddess standing [PLATE LII], we find her bust [PLATE LIII], or the goddess is shown hunting to the right [PLATE LIV]. Some coins even show Artemis standing in her temple [PLATE LV].[38] Apart from this we find her animals, stag and rabbit.[39] Artemis is the most frequent motif on the coins of Gerasa and her types entirely dominate the coinage of the city.

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[33] See Lichtenberger (2003), p.202-8.

[34] On Atargatis/Dea Syria, see now Lightfoot (2003).

[35] Cf. Butcher (1988); Nollé (1997) with further literature.

[36] On the coinage of Gerasa, see Spijkerman (1978), p.156-67; Lichtenberger (2003), p.195-200.

[37] See ibid., p.195-7.

[38] Ibid., pl.21 MZ108-9.

[39] Rosenberger (1978), p.50 nº3; see also Lichtenberger (2003), p.195 with n.1736.

If we look for Zeus Olympios in the civic coinage we make a surprising discovery: he is hardly present. Only in the first emission of AD 67-8 he is depicted on a very small denomination [PLATE LVI].[40] After that he completely vanishes from the civic coinage. This evidence stands in sharp contrast to the other information we have for the significance of Zeus Olympios in Gerasa: according to the architectural and epigraphic sources he seems to have been more or less as important as Artemis. Furthermore, Zeus Olympios figures prominently in the coinage of other cities in the Decapolis, which means that depicting him on coinage was regarded as prestigious by the neighbouring cities. It is unlikely that the lack of Zeus Olympios in the civic coinage of Gerasa is due to inaccuracy of the numismatic record, as many specimens of coins of Gerasa are known. Even if new coin types will be discovered, the overall picture will hardly be altered. To find an explanation for the entire dominance of Artemis on coins, we have to look at the civic coinage more closely.

The Coins with Artemis-Tyche

From the times of Hadrian some unusual coins of Artemis were issued, showing the bust of Artemis with the legend *Artemis Tychê Gerasôn*, 'Artemis, the Tyche of the citizens of Gerasa' [PLATE LIII].[41] This is a remarkable legend, for Tyche, the Greek goddess of fate, was also a personification and tutelary deity of cities, and her Greek iconography was fixed as a goddess with mural crown.[42] At all other places in the Decapolis, Tyche was depicted according to this iconography and sometimes she had further Greek Tyche-attributes, like the cornucopia and the rudder on the globe.[43] In Gerasa the case is different. But we have a comparable example from a city nearby: in the coinage of Bostra, under Antoninus Pius,

[40] Spijkerman (1978), p.158-9 n°1; *RPC* I, p.669 n°4841; Lichtenberger (2003), p.199.

[41] Spijkerman (1978), p.158-65 n^{os}4-8,13-5,18-20,24-8,30; Lichtenberger (2003), p.196. On the specimen [PLATE 6], Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., *Mail Bid Sale* 61, Closing Wednesday, September 25, 2002, p.93 Lot 1070, *Gerasôn* has to be reconstructed.

[42] On the iconography of Tyche, see Villard (1997).

[43] On Tyche in the Decapolis, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.295-304.

Athena also has the epithet Tyche.[44] In Bostra, Athena was probably an *interpretatio Graeca* of the Arab goddess Allat, who was the tutelary goddess of the settlement.[45] A similar example is known from North-Syrian Hierapolis, where the great Syrian goddess Atargatis-Dea Syria could be depicted with the mural crown as well, because she was (like the Greek Tyche) understood as the tutelary goddess of the city.[46]

A similar case is probably to be found in Gerasa, where Artemis as tutelary goddess of the settlement was called Tyche. Thus the Greek Tyche title was being attributed to an indigenous goddess because she had (like other highest Near Eastern goddesses) the quality of protector of the settlement, a quality which made her similar to the Greek Tyche. This quality is also found for Gad in a Semitic context.[47] In such contexts, the most important deity of a locality could function as its Gad. The Greek functional equivalent for Gad was Tyche. By naming the Artemis of Gerasa 'Tyche', we find something like a double *interpretatio Graeca* of the local goddess of Gerasa: first she was interpreted as Artemis and then as Tyche, to make clear her complex character that did not match simply with one Greek goddess. Such a double *interpretatio Graeca* is also found elsewhere in the Decapolis. We have for example epigraphic evidence for a Zeus Kronos[48] and a Zeus Poseidon[49] in Gerasa, and for a Zeus Ares[50] in Pella. And there is also iconographic evidence for a contamination of Heracles with Dionysos' and Zeus' iconography, which probably hints at Heracles being a former Melqart-like god.[51] Naming Artemis 'Tyche' is also a further hint at the Near Eastern origin of the deity. The Tyche epithet would be unusual for a Greek goddess: Athena, for example, is without doubt the protectress of Athens, but she is never called 'Tyche of Athens'.

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[44] Spijkerman (1978), p.70-1 nº8; Kindler (1983), p.57-8.
[45] Cf. Sourdel (1952), p.69-73; Kindler (1983), p.57-8.
[46] On the mural crown of Atargatis-Dea Syria, see Lightfoot (2003), p.22-8.
[47] On Gad, see Kaizer (1997) and (1998).
[48] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.388 nº26.
[49] Ibid., p.392-3 nº39.
[50] Smith and Day (1989), p.131.
[51] Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.290-4.

The Coins with Tyche and a Greek Founder

The Tyche epithet for Artemis is surprising also because in the coinage of Gerasa we find the 'regular' Tyche as well.[52] Tyche is depicted according to classical Greek iconography as the turreted goddess on the earliest emission of Gerasa [PLATE LVII]. On coins under Marcus Aurelius we find Tyche standing with mural crown, rudder on globe and cornucopia, together with a second figure [PLATE LVIII-LIX][53]. At the same time, Tyche is furthermore shown on coins following the type of the Tyche of Antioch [PLATE LX].[54]

Of special interest is the type with the second figure [PLATE LVIII-LIX]. This figure is that of a young man with spear or sceptre, wearing a long coat, probably a *chlamys*. The iconography and the statuary type are reminiscent of Alexander the Great or a Hellenistic ruler.[55] Comparable draped figures can be found on the famous relief from Dura-Europos of the Gad of Dura and Seleucus Nicator from AD 159 [PLATE LXI],[56] and on the coinage of Caesarea ad Libanum under Elagabalus [PLATE LXII], which depicts Alexander the Great (who had a temple in the city) in a similar way.[57] According to Malalas (276), Trajan erected a statue of Tyche in Antioch that is crowned by the city's founders Antiochus and Seleucus. This composition might have looked similar to ours.[58] L. Dirven is of the opinion that the Antiochene group was the model for the one depicted on the relief from Dura-Europos.[59] The same could be true for the statues in Gerasa, but we have to be aware that such groups with *Figurenrahmen* were widespread in Syria and Phoenicia.[60]

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[52] On Tyche in Gerasa, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.197-9.

[53] Spijkerman (1978), p.160-3 n^{os}9-10,16,21.

[54] Ibid., p.160-5 n^{os}11-2,17,22,32-3.

[55] Cf. Smith (1988), p.32 and p.153-4; Svenson (1995), p.5-7 (on Alexander Aigiochus).

[56] Rostovtzeff (1939). See now also Dirven (1999), p.101-27.

[57] *BMC Phoenicia*, p.110 n^{os}8-10. On the temple of Alexander, see SHA *Alex. Sev.* 5.1-2.

[58] For the group in Antioch, see Balty (1981), p.846 n°63, p.848-9 n°102-19 and p.851; Butcher (2003), p.238 fig.93.3. On the historicity of Malalas' account, see Dirven (1999), p.112 n.53. See also Christof (2001), p.34.

[59] Dirven (1999), p.112-3.

[60] Schweitzer (1931), p.217-28; Fleischer (1986); Christof (2001), p.181-3.

Now, who is the male figure on the coins from Gerasa? In my opinion there are two plausible possibilities: first, a Seleucid king named Antiochus, who gave his name to Antioch Gerasa, or second, Alexander the Great, who, according to a tradition recorded by Byzantine authors,[61] was also a founder of Gerasa. As Alexander had never been in this very region, the tradition can hardly be historical, but may be seen against the background of the so-called Second Sophistic, a period in which cities sometimes constructed such local foundation legends.[62] As regards Alexander, we can further put forward that a coin of Gerasa with the bust of the famous Macedonian king, with a legend naming him the founder of Gerasa, was issued under Septimius Severus and Elagabalus [PLATE LXIII],[63] at the same time that the type of Tyche with the second figure ceased. Both coin types had the same medium large denomination. Such a strict connection between general subject and denomination can often be observed in civic coinage. Unfortunately, there is no striking evidence for a definite identification of the figure as Alexander, but at least it is very likely that we have a coin type that shows Tyche together with a Greek founder. We have to return to this point later.

Coin Legends and Coin Depictions

Is it possible to conclude that there was some sort of rivalry for the title of Tyche between a Greek Tyche with a Greek founder and the Near Eastern Artemis-Tyche? This would remain a weak supposition if we did not have further evidence for this interpretation. However, there is a distinct relationship between coin legends and coin depictions. Since the time of Hadrian (after a gap of coinage since Nero) the image of Artemis is always connected with the city name Gerasa [e.g. PLATE LII-LV]. On the other hand, the coins with the Greek Tyche always name the city in the legend 'Antioch by the Chrysorhoas, the former Gerasa' [e.g. PLATE LVIII-LIX].[64] The

[61] *Etym. Magn.*, s.v. Gerasenos. See also below, with n.112.

[62] Cf. Scheer (1993); Lichtenberger (2003), p.344-51 with further literature.

[63] Spijkerman (1978), p.164-7 n^{os}29,34-5.

[64] As there is no corpus of the dies of the coinage of Gerasa yet, I list the relevant obverse legends of coins from the catalogue of Spijkerman (1978):

Bust of Artemis as Artemis Tyche: "*Artemis Tyche Gerason*"

– p.158-9 n^{o}4 (Hadrian): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ

Antiochene Tyche type, which is depicted between Marcus Aurelius and Elagabalus, also has the Antioch legend [PLATE LX]; only coins under Elagabalus name the city Gerasa.[65] It is not likely that this strict division of city-names occurred by chance and we can probably conclude from this that the Greek city-goddess Tyche was indeed connected with the city name Antioch and that Artemis Tyche was connected with the city name Gerasa. In this context we have to recall that Gerasa is a Semitic name.

It is also of interest that the Greek Zeus Olympios is found in an inscription from Gerasa together with Tyche,[66] and this is further support for the conclusion that a connection existed between a Greek founder, the city name Antioch, Zeus Olympios and Tyche. Opposed to this we have an 'Oriental' Artemis-Tyche and the Semitic name of the city Gerasa. Thus Zeus Olympios was the god of the Greek settlement of Antioch, and Artemis seems to have been the main goddess of another, probably indigenous, settlement Gerasa which preceded Antioch. Unfortunately, up to now we do not have any evi-

– p.158-9 nº5 (Hadrian): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.158-9 nº6 (Hadrian): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.158-9 nº7a (Hadrian): ΑΡΤΕ ΤΥ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.158-9 nº7b (Hadrian): ΑΡΤΕΜΙ ΤΥ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.160-1 nº13a (Marcus Aurelius): ΑΡΤ ΤΥΧ Γ
– p.160-1 nº13b (Marcus Aurelius): ΑΡΤ ΤΥΧ Γ
– p.160-1 nº14 (Faustina Iunior): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.162-3 nº18 (Lucius Verus): ΑΡΤ ΤΥΧ ΓΕ
– p.162-3 nº18 (Lucilla): [ΑΡΤΕ]ΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.162-3 nº24 (Commodus): ΑΡΤ ΤΥΧ ΓΕ
– p.164-5 nº25 (Commodus): ΑΡΤΙ ΥΧΙ
– p.164-5 nº26 (Commodus): ΑΡΤ ΤΥΧ ΓΕ
– p.164-5 nº27 (Crispina): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ

Artemis-Huntress: „*Artemis Tyche Gerason*"

– p.158-9 nº8 (Marcus Aurelius): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕ[...]
– p.160-1 nº15 (Lucius Verus): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ Γ
– p.162-3 nº20 (Commodus): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.164-5 nº28 (Septimius Severus): [ΑΡΤΕ]ΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ
– p.164-5 nº30 (Caracalla): ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥΧΗ ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ

Tyche standing with Greek founder: „*Antiocheon ton pros to Chrysorrhoe ton proteron Geras(en)on*"

– p.160-1 nº9 (Marcus Aurelius): ΑΝΤΩΠΡ ΧΡΤΩΠΡΓΕ
– p.160-1 nº10 (Marcus Aurelius): ΑΝΤΩΠΡΧ ΡΤ ΩΠΡΓΕ
– p.160-1 nº16a (Lucius Verus): ΑΝ.ΤΩ.ΠΡ. ΧΡ.ΤΩ.ΠΡ.ΓΕ
– p.160-1 nº16b (Lucius Verus): ΑΝΤΩ.ΠΡΧ ΡΤ Ω ΠΡ ΓΕ
– p.162-3 nº21 (Commodus): ΑΝΤΩΠΡΟ Χ[Ρ]ΤΩΠΡ Γ Ε

[65] On these coins see below, n.115.

[66] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.381 nº13.

dence for Artemis in Gerasa that is older than the first century AD, but it would not come as a surprise if someday under, or in the vicinity of, the later Artemision traces of an earlier phase were found. Indeed, in the vicinity of the Artemision two other sanctuaries are located that are of interest in this respect, as they both belonged to non-Greek deities. First, there is the temple under the cathedral that at least dates back to the first century BC.[67] This sanctuary can be connected with an Arab god named Pakeidas/Theos Arabikos, who is mentioned in inscriptions close to the temple.[68] The second sanctuary is the so-called temple C.[69] It probably was a sanctuary of North-Syrian deities, as can be deduced from its ground plan. From this it should be possible to conclude that the non-Greek settlement, or at least its sanctuaries, laid here, in the vicinity of the Artemision. In this region Hellenistic Rhodian jar-handles have already been found.[70]

Situation of Rivalry in Gerasa

It seems obvious that in Gerasa we have a juxtaposition of a Greek Zeus Olympios and an indigenous Artemis. What follows from this situation? One gets the impression that there must have been some sort of rivalry. A first indication for competition is the reclamation of the Tyche title on both sides. Another indication is the architectural history of the two sanctuaries, which became more and more monumental:[71] First a large court was built in the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios and a theatre close to it, then the large Artemision was erected and a theatre was built for it as well. In reaction to this, the naos of Zeus Olympios was constructed. The temple of Zeus did not have forecourts and propyla as monumental as the Artemision, but the size of its naos proper surpassed that of the temple of Artemis. Finally, a last symptom of rivalry between Artemis and Zeus Olympios may be found in the nearly complete lack of images of Zeus

[67] Cf. Jäggi, Meier and Brenk (1998); Lichtenberger (2003), p.221-5.

[68] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.383-6 n^{os}17-22.

[69] Cf. Fisher and Kraeling in Kraeling (1938), p.139-48; Lichtenberger (2003), p.238-41.

[70] Kraeling (1938), p.32; Fisher in Kraeling (1938), p.138; Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.460 n^{os}243,246.

[71] See also Wenning (1994), p.13-4; Parapetti (2002), p.23-4.

Olympios on the civic coinage, with which we return to the starting point. Is it possible to explain the lack of Zeus Olympios on the coinage with the hypothesis that the civic magistrates who were responsible for coinage[72] were dominated by the 'party of Artemis', and that this led to the absence of coins for Zeus? At first sight this explanation seems attractive, but the problem arises with the existence of Tyche-coins with a Greek founder that can also be attributed to the 'Zeus-party'. Thus the 'Zeus-party' seems to have been involved in civic coinage as well, but their identity fostering image was Tyche.

Original Juxtaposition of a Hellenistic and an Indigenous Settlement

If one follows the model, that, originally, there had been two different settlements in Gerasa, one Greek and one indigenous, then it becomes very unlikely that Zeus Olympios was the *interpretatio Graeca* of an older Near Eastern deity. Rather, he seems to have reached Gerasa as a Greek deity, who was independent from the former local settlement, although we cannot exclude that later he became influenced by his Syrian surroundings. For example, the architectural disposition of the sanctuary with an open altar-court seems to be derived from local models.[73] But this is not surprising, as already the Roman historian Livy in the first century BC complains (38.17.12) that the Macedonians who came to Syria with the Macedonian conquest degenerated to Syrians.[74] Nevertheless, we have to assume a juxtaposition of the different cultures rather than a synthetic mixture. It seems therefore unlikely that Zeus Olympios was introduced to Gerasa as an *interpretatio Graeca* of an indigenous god by Antiochos IV or another Seleucid king in the second century BC.[75]

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[72] On the responsibility and reasons for civic coinage, see Ziegler (1993), p.133-53.

[73] On such models, see Ball (2000), p.329-56.

[74] See also Dirven (1999), p.115, on the temple of Zeus Megistos in Dura-Europos: "even if it is assumed that the architecture of this temple was of an oriental character, this does not necessarily imply that the temple housed an oriental god" (with further reference to Ai Khanoum).

[75] On the importance of the cult of Zeus for the Seleucid dynasty in general, see Mastrocinque (2002), p.355-68.

Further Evidence

We can find further evidence for this interpretation elsewhere in the Decapolis: one example is Hippos, on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. That city was also called 'Antioch', which hints at the fact that there had been some Seleucid involvement in civic affairs during the Hellenistic period.[76] In the coinage of Hippos under Marcus Aurelius we do not only find a Near Eastern Zeus Arotèsios [PLATE LXIV], but also a thoroughly Greek Zeus Olympios [PLATE LXV].[77] The juxtaposition of Zeus Arotèsios and Zeus Olympios finds an explanation by supposing that Zeus Olympios came to Hippos with the foundation of Antioch, and Zeus Arotèsios is (like the Artemis of Gerasa) a later *interpretatio Graeca* of a local god as Zeus. When 'Antioch Hippos' was founded, this local god was not interpreted as Zeus Olympios, but the local god continued to exist. Probably at a later time (possibly in confrontation with, or influenced by, the Greek Zeus Olympios) this god, who was a god of weather and fertility, was interpreted as Zeus Arotèsios ('ploughman'). Such a relationship between an old god and the new one is also mirrored by the name of the city, which was called 'Antiochia pros Hippo'. It is possible that the name refers to two originally separate settlements.

A similar case can probably be observed at nearby Gadara. Gadara was also called 'Antioch' and 'Seleucia'[78]. In the city a Heracles was worshipped, who was probably influenced by Heracles-Melqart from Tyre [PLATE LXVI-LXVII].[79] Apart from Heracles the other main deity of Gadara was Zeus Olympios [PLATE LXVIII], who had his sanctuary close to the citadel with the Hellenistic settlement.[80] We do not know the place of the sanctuary of Heracles. But we can detect an iconographic competition between Heracles and Zeus: on the city's coinage Heracles has a thunderbolt as attribute [PLATE

[76] On Hellenistic finds in Hippos, see Segal e.a. (2003), p.11-8.

[77] On Zeus Arotèsios and Zeus Olympios in Hippos, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.33-40 and p.49-50.

[78] On Gadara see now the monumental monograph by Weber (2002).

[79] Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.89-95.

[80] On the architectural finds of what was probably the temple of Zeus, see Weber (2002), p.113-7. On the coins of Gadara with Zeus Olympios, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.96-8.

LXVI-LXVII].[81] In Greek and Roman iconography the thunderbolt usually belongs to Zeus and it can hardly be observed with Heracles. As regards Gadara, however, Heracles was identified with Melqart, and was as such also the old Baal of the settlement, master of the thunderbolt.[82] A striking parallel case for such a depiction is the Sol of Elagabalus, who on Roman imperial gold and silver coins of Elagabalus also carries the thunderbolt, as he is the former El worshipped in Emesa [PLATE LXIX].[83] Thus also in Gadara we have a juxtaposition of the Greek Zeus Olympios and a Near Eastern male god, whose *interpretatio Graeca* was Heracles. Naturally, the urge to interpret Melqart as Zeus (Olympios) would not have been as strong as was the case with the weather-god in Hippos.[84] But the structural juxtaposition of the Greek Zeus Olympios and a Near Eastern god with an *interpretatio Graeca* is comparable to what happened at Gerasa and Hippos.

Finally two famous examples from a region adjacent to the Decapolis have to be mentioned briefly: both Mt Gerizim and Jerusalem are places where indigenous deities and a Greek Zeus are found. In the past, both places have been put forward as examples for a situation in which Zeus Olympios was, under Antiochos IV, the Seleucid *interpretatio Graeca* of a local god.[85] However, for both places a different interpretation is possible, as at both places a Hellenistic settlement and an indigenous one are attested. In Jerusalem there was the traditional, Jewish Jerusalem, and also the Hellenized Antiochenes in Jerusalem (*2 Macc.* 4:9).[86] And at Mt Gerizim there were both the Samaritan community and a Hellenistic community, which is attested by archaeological finds, and which Josephus (*AJ* 12.257-64) probably means when he mentions the Sidonians in Shechem.[87] Thus the evidence for Zeus (Olympios) in Jerusalem and at Mt Ger-

[81] Spijkerman (1978), p.142-3 n^{os}54-5 and p.150-1 n^{o}80. Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.90 and p.92-3.

[82] On Melqart see Bonnet (1988).

[83] *BMC Roman Empire* V, p.575 n^{o}288, pl.91.9; Lanz, *Numismatik Lanz München, Auktion 102. Münzen der Antike.* 28. Mai 2001, p.88 n^{o}804.

[84] Especially not since Melqart (as is likely) had arrived at Gadara as Heracles-Melqart.

[85] E.g. Bickermann (1937), p.94-6; Tscherikower (1959), p.181-2.

[86] See Lichtenberger (2003), p.342-3, with further literature.

[87] On Mt Gerizim, see now Zangenberg (2003), esp. p.33, and also J. Kirkpatrick's paper in this volume. On the Sidonian settlement in Shechem, see Isaac (1991), p.142-3.

izim does not necessarily have to be interpreted as a superimposition of a Greek on a indigenous deity, since it can also be understood as a juxtaposition of a Greek and an indigenous god. Recently, L. Dirven has also come to a similar conclusion with regard to Dura-Europos, namely that the local Zeus Olympios, who is depicted on the Gad-relief from Dura [PLATE LXI], has nothing to do with Baal-Shamin.[88] It seems that also there Zeus Olympios is a Greek god, who is not an *interpretatio Graeca* of an indigenous one. So far we know of no example where such an *interpretatio Graeca* of an indigenous god as Zeus Olympios can be proven.

Zeus Olympios, *Asylia* and Dynastic City Names

There are reasons for the importance of Zeus Olympios for the Seleucids in the second century BC other than the (not existing) possibility of using him as *interpretatio Graeca* of Near Eastern indigenous gods. Apollo had originally been the main tutelary deity of the Seleucids,[89] but Zeus Olympios became more important under Antiochos IV [PLATE L]. One reason was that he fitted better the needs of a Hellenistic dynasty. Since the fourth century BC, one can observe that 'father deities' were, as 'ruler deities', connected with Hellenistic rulers.[90] Zeus Olympios has thus to be seen more in the context of the self-representation of Seleucid rulers than in the context of Seleucid religious policy that interferes in civic affairs.[91]

However, there can be no doubt that the introduction of Zeus Olympios into the Decapolis has to do with the Seleucids. This is proven not only by the fact that Zeus Olympios is mentioned in a second-century inscription from Nysa-Scythopolis in the context of the Seleucid ruler cult,[92] but also by the fact that he is found in cities which have Seleucid dynastic names (Antioch Hippos, Antioch

[88] Dirven (1999), p.111-9.

[89] Cf. Bouché-Leclercq (1913-4), p.283, p.465-6 and p.651-63; Mehl (1986), p.5-6 and p.97-101.

[90] Cf. Maderna (1988), p.29-30; Svenson (1995), p.5-14.

[91] For the relationship between Zeus Olympios and Antiochos IV, see Mørkholm (1963), p.68-74, esp. p.72-4.

[92] The inscription refers to the priests of Zeus Olympios and the *Theoi Soteres* and to Demetrios II Nicator (129-125 BC). See Rostovtzeff (1935), p.60; Lichtenberger (2003), p.153 with further literature.

and Seleucia Gadara, Nysa-Scythopolis, Antioch Gerasa)[93] and which had the right of *asylia*.[94] E. Bickermann showed that the right of *asylia* was granted to cities in Syria by the Seleucids.[95] In contrast to these cities of the Decapolis, Zeus Olympios is missing in Pella and Philadelphia. Both cities did not have the right of *asylia* either, and instead of Seleucid they had Ptolemaic dynastic names. Philadelphia drew its name from Ptolemaios II Philadelphos,[96] and Pella was formerly called Berenike.[97]

Table: Relationship between dynastic city names, Zeus Olympios and asylia *in the Decapolis*

	Zeus Olympios	Asylia	Seleucid city name	Ptolemaic city name
Hippos	X	X	X	
Gadara	X	X	X	
Scythopolis	X	X	X	
Gerasa	X	X	X	
Abila		X	X	
Pella				X
Philadelphia				X
Dion				
Kapitolias	X	X		

As can be seen in the table above, for Abila and Dion the evidence is inconclusive. Abila was called 'Seleucia' and also had *asylia*, but up to now no Zeus Olympios has been found in the city. In Dion neither Zeus Olympios nor *asylia* nor Seleucid city-name has been found yet.[98] This seems to imply that either a Zeus Olympios could be found in Abila one day, or that the whole model should not be seen as too strict. Kapitolias is a special case. The era of the city goes back to AD 97/98 and the city probably received its Romanized

[93] For Hippos, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.28; for Gadara, see Wörrle (2000); for Scythopolis, see Rigsby (1980), p.238-42. For Zeus Olympios in Nysa-Scythopolis, see now Barkay (2003), p.141-3.

[94] On *asylia* in general, see Rigsby (1996). For *asylia* in the Decapolis, see Lichtenberger (2003), p.337-8.

[95] Bickermann (1938), p.149-56.

[96] Steph. Byz., s.v. Philadelphia.

[97] Steph. Byz., s.v. Berenike.

[98] This might be due to the fact that coinage (which is our main source for civic titles) is attested for Dion only between Septimius Severus and Elagabalus. On the coinage of Dion, see Augé (1988). Exactly in this time, most other cities of the Decapolis do not mention their titles any more, which means that the coinage of Dion known so far cannot have dismissed such titles. Cf. Rigsby (1996), p.34.

name only then.[99] We do not know anything about a significant earlier settlement at Kapitolias, but in the light of the cult of Zeus Olympios and the privilege of *asylia*, both present, it is likely that also Kapitolias was (before its Roman refoundation) a Seleucid foundation. However, its former Seleucid name remains unknown.[100]

There is some evidence that in the Decapolis the sanctuaries of Zeus Olympios were connected with *asylia*. This is hinted at by inscriptions from Gerasa and Hippos, which mention Zeus Olympios *Phyxios* ('putting to flight')[101] and Zeus *Hikesios* ('of suppliants').[102] And K.J. Rigsby noticed that in Gadara the title *hiera kai asylos* is, with one exception,[103] only found on coins depicting Zeus Olympios.[104] From this he concluded that it is conceivable that the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios was the reason for the city being *hiera kai asylos*. If this proves right, it not only supports the argument of a connection between Zeus Olympios and the Seleucids, but also the methodological approach to come to far reaching conclusions from coin legends being connected with specific types.

Who is Behind Tyche in Gerasa?

To one question regarding Gerasa we have to return: is it possible to find out who is behind the two parties in the city? For the time of the foundation of 'Antioch' in the second century BC it is probably correct to assume that the worshippers of Zeus Olympios were Greek settlers or Hellenized Syrians[105] and that the worshippers of Artemis (or whatever her name was at that time) were natives. This is supported by the reports over the foundation of other Seleucid cities as collected by P. Briant. They show that cities sometimes were divided into separate quarters for natives and Greeks.[106] It is also

[99] On Kapitolias, see Lenzen (2002); Moors (2002), p.163-7; Lichtenberger (2003), p.114-27.

[100] For the pre-Roman history of Kapitolias, see also the tradition linking Alexander the Great with the city, as attested by city coins of Kapitolias. Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.122-3.

[101] Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.376-8 n°6.

[102] Germer-Durand (1899), p.8 n°3; Lichtenberger (2003), p.41.

[103] Spijkerman (1978), p.150-1 n°80 [PLATE 20].

[104] Cf. Rigsby (1996), p.534.

[105] On such population groups, see now Thiel (2003), p.227-8.

[106] Briant (1978), p.84 and p.88-9 = id. (1982), p.254 and p.258-9.

supported by the study of G.M. Cohen on Seleucid colonies, which were often founded near native settlements and with which a close relationship could develop, sometimes leading to fusion.[107] But can we assume a similar situation of division between Greeks and natives in Gerasa in the later Roman period? Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient sources that allow this assumption, and we should be cautious, as for example in the inscriptions referring to the two deities all dedicants have Greek personal names, so that an ethnic identification remains difficult. It is also unlikely to postulate an ethnic division for the Roman period, because for example the architecture of the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios combines Near Eastern elements with Graeco-Roman ones (as does the Artemision).[108] And the Artemis goddess became a 'Greek' goddess through *interpretatio Graeca*. Thus the normative attraction of Greek culture was so strong that we cannot construct a conflicting contrast between 'Greek' and 'Oriental' in Gerasa in the Roman period.

One last example can illustrate the strength of Greek culture in Roman Gerasa. As we have seen above, it has been argued that on the coin with Tyche and the second figure [PLATE LVIII-LIX] the man behind the goddess might be Alexander the Great. But this interpretation faces a serious problem: when the bust of Alexander is depicted on coins under Septimius Severus and Elagabalus [PLATE LXIII],[109] the Macedonian is called 'founder' (*ktistes*[110]) of 'Gerasa', and not, as one would expect (despite inherent problems) of 'Antioch'.[111] Furthermore, the Alexander legend in the late antique *Etymologicum magnum*, connecting Alexander with our city, links him with the city name of Gerasa. The legend is an aetiology of that name, stating that Alexander settled elderly (*gerontes*) there, after a battle:

[107] Cohen (1978).
[108] Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.200-1, p.207 and p.209-10.
[109] Spijkerman (1978), p.164-7 n^os^29,34-5.
[110] Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.164-5 n^os^29,31.
[111] The fact that the name 'Antioch' is in itself post-Alexander is no obstacle for a foundation legend connecting the city with Alexander. Even Antioch-by-the-Orontes had a foundation legend which linked the city with Alexander (Lib. *Or.* XI.72-74.250). Cf. Fatouros and Krischer (1992), p.106-7. See also above, n.100.

> Γερασηνός. Ἀπὸ τόπου. Ἀλέξανδρος πόλιν παραλαβών, τοὺς ἐν ἡλικίᾳ πάντας κτείνας, ἀπέλυσε τοὺς γέροντας. Οἳ δὲ συνελθόντες κτίζουσι πόλιν, καὶ λαβόντες γυναῖκας ἐπιδοποίησαν.[112]

Thus, it seems, Alexander is connected with the name Gerasa, and we should not identify him as the man on the 'Tyche and founder' coins. The Greek founder on the coins, then, more likely is an Antiochos. If we carry the hypothesis of a competition in the city further and start speculating, we might assume that 'Gerasa' invented Alexander the Great as her founder in reaction to 'Antioch's' Antiochus, so that they had a Greek founder with even more prestige.[113] Thus, in the second and third centuries AD, a Greek founder (and connected with him Greek culture) was highly attractive for both parties in Gerasa.

Apart from the symptoms of civic bipolarity and rivalry as presented above, we know little about the motivations of the inhabitants of Gerasa to form such parties, and we have no idea if these parties had any formal organisation.[114] We do not know either how the bipolarity affected daily life in the city. But there is some indication that the rivalry came to an end, or at least lost its force, in the third century AD. On the last Tyche coins of Gerasa, under Elagabalus, Tyche is depicted in the type of the Tyche of Antioch, and for the first time this type is connected with the legend *Tychè Gerasôn*.[115] Until then, this Tyche type had always had the Antioch-legend[116] and Artemis had been the only *Tychè Gerasôn*. Similarly, we do not find any coins with Tyche and the Greek founder any more under Elagabalus. If we take these coins seriously, they might hint at a change in Gerasa: by the time they were minted, Zeus Olympios, or the rivalry between him and Artemis, had lost part of its importance

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[112] *Etym. Magn.*, s.v. Gerasenos. See also the *scholion* of Iamblichus on Nichomachos arith., as quoted in Gaisford (1848), p.228,3.658F.

[113] In such a legend the general of Alexander, Perdiccas, who had a statue in Gerasa (see Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.423 n°137) could have played some part. Cf. Lichtenberger (2003), p.232.

[114] Do the two theatres mirror some kind of civic organization? There is one inscription referring to *Makedones* in Gerasa. Unfortunately, we know nothing about this group. See Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.410 n°78. If the *Makedones* are not a trade guilt, the reference might indeed hint at one of our parties.

[115] Spijkerman (1978), p.164-5 n^{os}32-3.

[116] Spijkerman (1978), p.160-3 n^{os}11-2,17,22.

and the extraordinarily bipolar city of Gerasa had lost an incentive to its enormous architectural development.[117]

[117] There is evidence that the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios lost importance in the late second century and that already in the third century "parts of the sacred grounds were used for industrial purposes", see Egan and Bikai (1998), p.598. Cf. Seigne (1997), p.1001. The Artemision on the other hand experienced further building activity in the third century AD. Cf. Kraeling (1938), p.60; Welles in Kraeling (1938), p.404 nº62 and p.408-9 nº74. See also Parapetti (2002), p.33. Does this mean that the cult of Artemis entirely dominated the city in the third century AD?

HOW TO BE A BAD SAMARITAN: THE LOCAL CULT OF MT GERIZIM

JONATHAN KIRKPATRICK

Introduction

Flavia Neapolis, in the middle of Samaria and dominated by Mts Gerizim and Ebal on either side, has a fascinating and tantalising archaeological record. Founded as a city with a Greek constitution after the First Jewish Revolt, it was made a Roman colony in the mid-third century by Philip 'the Arab' and evidently flourished during the second and third centuries. Its location in Samaria has been of great significance for its treatment in modern scholarship, for it is in the middle of the land of the Samaritans, and it has essentially been seen as a pagan city in their midst. When looking at a source from Samaria, we ask the question, is it pagan or is it Samaritan? If Samaritan, it is local and part of a tradition that stretches from long before the coming of the Romans up until the present day. If, on the other hand, it is pagan, then it is classed as alien, a product of Roman imperialism, and not by any means local. In this paper I mean to challenge this dichotomy in our way of thinking. I will suggest that the division between 'alien pagan' and 'local Samaritan' is anachronistic for the Roman period, and I will aim to look at the evidence afresh, setting aside this assumption. After taking a closer look at the assumptions inherent in the study of the Samaritans, I will consider the literary sources for Gerizim, Neapolis and the Samaritans, and then I will move on to the material remains of Neapolis itself.

What sort of thing was a Samaritan and how do you recognise one when you come across one? This question has proved a testing conundrum for students of the ancient period. The search for the Samaritan synagogue is a case in point: how do you distinguish it from the Jewish variety? R. Pummer made use of the distinctive Samaritan script, which has been found in the Byzantine synagogues of Beth She'an, Sha'alvim and Ramat Aviv (in Tel Aviv). In fact, in the recent *Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* he explained

that in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods Samaritan material culture was "practically indistinguishable from its Jewish counterpart."[1] The only distinguishing mark is the script. Meanwhile, Y. Magen exemplifies another approach. In a report on recent discoveries he set out his methods: "the basic principle guiding our search for the synagogues was their orientation facing Mount Gerizim."[2] He then proceeded to describe the new synagogues, and rounding up in pleasing manner he reported that "in conclusion, all the buildings which have been uncovered to the present and which have been clearly defined as Samaritan synagogues are oriented precisely towards Mount Gerizim."[3] In the course of the discussion he covered the three synagogues which Pummer dealt with. Not convinced that the so-called Samaritan script was necessarily confined to the Samaritans, he dismissed the buildings in Beth She'an and Ramat Aviv, which are not directed towards Mt Gerizim. Sha'alvim, fortunately, is pointing the right way and is included in Magen's corpus. One compromise position has been to describe the Ramat Aviv building as a Samaritan church.

Evidently, all is not as clear as one might wish. The Samaritan script and their presumed synagogues are only found in archaeological contexts of the fourth century AD or later, so the situation is even bleaker for the first three centuries of this era, the period in which I am interested. Even more basic than recognising a Samaritan is defining a Samaritan. Such a designation as 'Samaritan' is bound to be to a certain degree subjective, and so it has been for centuries. To sum things up briefly, the Samaritans themselves call themselves 'Israelites', denoting their direct and authentic descent from the people led out of Egypt by Moses; the Rabbinic Jews (who, of course, call themselves 'Israelites') talk of the *Kutim*, that is immigrants from Persia; while those Jews, Christians and other Classical authors writing in Greek use the terms *Samaritēs* or *Samareus*, which denote the people who live in the land of Samaria—as I shall argue, this is a geographical designation, but the Greek terminology assumes that a particular people or *ethnos* lives in each area and that they will have their distinctive religious customs. It is not, however, a religious

[1] Pummer (1997), p.471.
[2] Magen (1993), p.228.
[3] Ibid., p.229.

designation in itself. The modern scholar, in using the term Samaritan, has to construct his or her own meaning, drawing on the designations found in the sources at his disposal. I propose that the last, Greek, designation has been both misunderstood and underused, and is perhaps the most appropriate one to employ when looking at the Roman period.

Our principal problem has been the lack of sources, since the earliest sources on the subject of their own history preserved by modern Samaritans are from the eleventh century at the earliest, and even their liturgical poetry does not go back before the fourth century of this era. The only contemporary ancient sources are polemical and set out to demonstrate that the Samaritans are pagan in their habits and outlook, adulterated Israelites at best. Modern scholarship, showing a perhaps unhealthy anti-pagan bias, has rejected this ancient polemic and has tended to prefer the modern Samaritan view, i.e. that they are a conservative group little changed from distant and authentic Israelite origins. This paper sets out to show that the ancient polemic may not always have been so far off the mark.

The study of ancient Judaism has long suffered from the same problems as those I have just summarised. Rabbinic literature has provided pretty well our only sources for the history of 'normative Judaism' after the Jewish revolts against the Romans, and the resulting picture of a strong centralised orthodoxy led by the Rabbis has long been accepted as the complete picture of the history of Judaism in this period. The twentieth century has seen this approach assaulted from various quarters. Most recently, S. Schwartz has emphasised the marginalisation of the Rabbis in the second and third centuries and argued that the majority of Jews were more or less fully assimilated into the pervasive pagan culture of the empire.[4] He writes that at this period, "the 'Jewish' cities of Palestine and the larger villages in their vicinity were normal participants in the urban culture of the Roman east, a culture that was suffused with pagan religiosity."[5] It was only the rise of Christianity as the dominant religious force in the fourth century that led to a revival of Judaism as the religion of a people devoted to their holy scripture and their own particular law.

[4] Schwartz (2002).
[5] Ibid., p.158.

The persuasiveness of Schwartz's argument lies in his refusal to accept the picture presented by the later Rabbinic sources, with their specific ideological agenda, and his emphasis instead on making full use of the contemporary evidence (or rather the lack thereof). Archaeology shows little evidence that can be designated as specifically Jewish, while there is abundant evidence of pagan religiosity and culture throughout the former (and future) Jewish areas. The claim, I think, is not so much that Jews disappeared or that all of them became conscious apostates from the faith of their Fathers, but rather that the dichotomy between Jew and 'pagan', regularly used to determine religious identity for this period, is a false distinction. In this paper I would like to do for the Samaritans of the Roman empire what Schwartz did for its Jews.

The Problem of Definition

Samaritan studies were long obsessed with the search for the original schism between Jews and Samaritans. This was in line with the outlook of the two groups themselves, who each view the other as essentially schismatic. Jews turn to *2 Kings* 17:24-41, where the importation by the Assyrians of five nations from beyond the Euphrates is described; an Israelite priest was provided to help them worship Yahweh, which they did, but they also brought their own gods, and worshipped them as well. This picture became paradigmatic for the Jewish idea of the Samaritan, although it of course corresponds with the presentation of the Northern Kingdom in the Hebrew Bible as well. Samaritan texts, on the other hand, push the schism back much further in time, to the occasion when the wicked priest Eli eloped with the Tabernacle from Mt Gerizim, its rightful place. This search for a moment of origin, a charter myth as it were, was what provided identity for the group under question. Thus, for the Samaritans the Jews are people who have corrupted the original word of God with obfuscating prophesies and are hopelessly mistaken as to the location for the true worship of God, which should be on Mt Gerizim; for the Jews, Samaritans are hopelessly tainted with foreign cults, losing their claim to be Israelites through interbreeding with other nations. In the same way, modern scholarship has sought to define the Samaritans by discovering their point of origin. More recently it has been realised that the search for a schism has been mistaken, rather the

division between the two groups has been seen as a process: it is this process which needs to be described. However, it is still in the process of division that the identity of the Samaritans is defined. Crucially, this means that the definition is couched in religious terms, and in terms which contrast the Samaritans with the Jews. The assumption that our definition should be of this type is founded in the polemic of our sources, and this assumption should be questioned.

As an example of a current consensus position, let me quote J. Purvis: "the essential character of Samaritanism of the early Roman period may be seen in the loyalty of the community to Gerizim and to the Torah in its possession."[6] This seems reasonable enough. Note immediately, however, the use of the term 'Samaritanism', a modern invention. Gerizim and the Samaritan Torah are both essential to the modern sect of Judaism, and they represent the key points of difference between the Samaritans and the Jews. As it happens, it seems to me that Mt Gerizim should be central to our concept of the Samaritans, although this is less because it represents a basic ideological opposition to Judaism centred in Jerusalem, but rather because it happens to be the focus of cult in the geographical area in which the Samaritans are found. But more of this anon. The Torah is less important, in my opinion. The Samaritan version differs at many points from the Masoretic Text, and at a few crucial passages it emphasises that the true cult of Yahweh should be centred on Mt Gerizim. Purvis himself wrote a masterly analysis of the origins of the Samaritan Pentateuch, tracing it back to the late Hasmonaean period on the basis of its form of script (the distinctive Samaritan version of Palaeo-Hebrew) and its orthography, and on his thesis that the textual tradition that it represents found its conclusion at this period.[7] Although emphasising that there was no schism between Jews and Samaritans, but rather a process, Purvis did identify a decisive conclusion to the process: "this final act was the promulgation by the Samaritans of a distinctively sectarian redaction of the Pentateuch".[8] Purvis' conclusions have been challenged; in particular Z. Ben-Hayyim has argued that the orthography represents a sepa-

[6] Purvis (1981), p.349.
[7] Purvis (1968).
[8] Id. (1976), p.165.

rate Samaritan pronunciation which could be a much later development, perhaps datable to the time of the Samaritan Aramaic texts of the fourth century AD.[9] Even if the decisive division between the Samaritan and Masoretic streams of textual development can be dated to the late Hasmonaean period, it does not necessarily follow that this represents the dramatic sectarian division which Purvis is proposing; representatives of the same textual tradition, the so-called Proto-Samaritan papyri, are found in the library near Qumran at the time of the first Jewish Revolt and should not be described as sectarian (certainly not Samaritan), while the true markers of sectarian division in the Samaritan Pentateuch, the references to the special importance of Mt Gerizim, are not securely datable before the first manuscripts, thus no earlier than the eleventh century. It is also pretty clear that Purvis, despite his protestations, is seeking to define the Samaritans in terms of a charter myth which distinguishes them from the Jews. He made his views most clear in a review of a book by R. Coggins, *Samaritans and Jews* (1975). Coggins took an extremely sceptical approach to the Jewish sources which we must rely on for the ancient period, concluding, for example, that "there is no reference to the Samaritans in the Hebrew Old Testament."[10] Purvis pointed out, approvingly, that Coggins' view of the Samaritans was that they "were/are the conservative Israelitic sect based at Gerizim, with a view of Torah, priesthood, and cult-centre which differed from that held in Jerusalem-centred Judaism. It is this sect whose origins are sought, and these people should not be confused with other peoples (pagan or otherwise) resident in ancient times in Samaria."[11] This is precisely the approach that I am aiming to avoid.

Justin Martyr

Justin Martyr should be a central figure in any discussion of the Samaritans under Roman rule. He was born under the shadow of Mt Gerizim around AD 100, and in his writings as a Christian apologist he mentions the Samaritans in various places. However, these references cause something of a headache. In his *First Apology* (53),

[9] Ben-Hayyim (1972), p.253-5; see also Tal (1989), p.149.
[10] Coggins (1975), p.163.
[11] Purvis (1976).

he talks of the Jews and the Samaritans (*Ioudaioi* and *Samareis*) as the recipients of the Law and of prophecies, and awaiting a Messiah; this fits in well with our picture from the later Samaritan sources, and from the fourth chapter of the *Gospel of John*. Elsewhere Justin mentions Simon the magician several times, emphasising that he is a Samaritan (*Samareus*) from the village of Gitthōn in Samaria, who flourished during the reign of Claudius. This man started a religious movement focused on the worship of Simon himself, and Justin furthermore claims (26) that 'almost all the Samaritans, and a few among other nations' (καὶ σχεδὸν πάντες μὲν Σαμαρεῖς, ὀλίγοι δὲ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἔθνεσιν) regard him as a god. There is a modern debate as to how this Simon relates to the one in *Acts* 8; Justin says he also dealt with Simon in his work on heresies (now lost), and this seems to be the origin of the long tradition of treatments of Simon among Christian heresiologists. The problem for scholars is how the first group of *Samareis*, paired with the *Ioudaioi*, relates to the second group, containing Simon and his devotees. One solution is to say that in one case Justin is referring to Samaritans as a religious group, in the other to the (pagan) inhabitants of Samaria.[12] The need to make this distinction becomes even more pressing when we consider how Justin presents himself. At the beginning of his *First Apology* he introduces himself to the emperor Antoninus Pius as Ἰουστῖνος Πρίσκου τοῦ Βακχείου τῶν ἀπὸ Φλαουϊας νέας πόλεως τῆς Συρίας Παλαιστίνης. Note the Latin names of himself and his father, and his grandfather's Greek name; the name of his hometown is the official Roman designation, Flavia Neapolis being the name given under Vespasian upon the city's foundation in AD 72, and Syria Palaestina being the name of the province since the time of Hadrian, when 'Iudaea' as an official area was abolished. This is the city's title on its contemporary coins. Justin tells us more about himself in due course. His education in all the Greek philosophical schools is recounted in the *Dialogue*, and he clearly counts himself among the Greeks in some way (though he never says he is Greek).[13] At *Dialogue* 28.2 he announces himself as 'uncircumcised' (a fact which might cause his Jewish interlocutor to distrust him). All in all, therefore, it seems that

[12] As, e.g., Hall (1989), p.45-6.

[13] So, at *First Apology* 25 he counts himself among those who once believed in the stories about Greek gods, but have now turned to Christ. His Greek education is recalled at *Dialogue* 3-7.

Justin is the perfect candidate for one of those pagan interlopers who now dwell in the land of Samaria, not a Samaritan, but a Samarian. In fact he does identify himself as a *Samareus* towards the end of the *Dialogue* (120.6): 'for having no concern on the part of my people, that is to say of the Samaritans, when corresponding with Caesar by letter I said that they erred by believing Simon the magician of their own people, whom they say is above all rule and authority and power.'[14]

If we have already decided that Simon and his followers are pagan non-Samaritans, then there is no problem in grouping Justin with them too. However, this is stretching the reading. Justin sees himself as part of a distinctive *genos*, and if this means simply everybody living in Samaria who is not a Samaritan in the religious sense, this usage would be unparalleled (for example, we never hear of the *genos* of 'the *Ioudaioi*', that group of non-Jewish settlers who occupied Judaea following the Jewish revolts). The distinction is not appreciated, either, by Justin's followers, some of whom certainly see Simon as a Samaritan in the religious sense (at least, if he is not a Jew). This is especially clear when Simon is paired with Dositheus, his putative pupil and another Samaritan; Dositheus is an important instigator of heresy also in the later Samaritan texts, and although it is sometimes suspected that he, too, is a Jew, it is not suggested that he is a Gentile.[15]

In fact, the distinction between 'Samaritan', in a religious sense, and 'Samarian', as simply somebody who lives in Samaria and who may be a pagan, is not one that existed in the Roman period. The Greek words Σαμαρειτης and Σαμαρευς, which seem to correspond to Samaritan and Samarian in English, in fact overlap in meaning; neither has a more 'religious' sense. The lexicographers argued over which was the correct ethnic designation for Samaria, but no agreement was reached.[16] The earliest instance of an attempt to make this religious distinction comes from an Egyptian divorce contract of

[14] Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους τοῦ ἐμοῦ, λέγω δὲ τῶν Σαμαρέων, τινὸς φροντίδα ποιούμενος, ἐγγράφως Καίσαρι προσομιλῶν, εἶπον πλανᾶσθαι αὐτοὺς πειθομένους τῷ ἐν τῷ γένει αὐτῶν μάγῳ Σίμωνι, ὃν θεὸν ὑπὲρ ἄνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως εἶναι λέγουσι.

[15] For Theodoret and Epiphanius, Simon is the fount of Christian heresy, while Origen emphasises his Samaritan origins (*Contra Celsum* 1.57); for Samaritan traditions concerning Simon and particularly Dositheus, see Purvis (1981).

[16] See Stephanus Byzantinus, s.v. Samareia.

AD 586; the unhappily married pair are described as 'Samaritans by religion' (Σαμαρῖται τὴν θρησκίαν).[17] By this time the Samaritan sect was clearly distinct from the earlier pagan culture of the Roman empire and more particularly from dominant Christianity, in opposition to which it had been able to define itself.

An Ambiguous Name

In Rabbinic literature we read of the *Kutim* who live in Samaria. This designation is a reference to *2 Kings* 17:24,30, where one of the five nations which provided the Assyrians' importees was Cuthah, and this is the way the Rabbis refer to the Samaritans. For the Rabbis the *Kutim* are a religious category, simply because it is in matters of *halakhah* that they feature. The principal question is over the status of the *Kutim*—are they to be regarded as Israelites or as *Goyim*, or somewhere in between? The question is one of the most disputed in Rabbinic literature up to the time of the Talmuds, and the ambiguity of the Samaritans' status here should not surprise us. It is the same ambiguity which we have found implicit in Justin Martyr (although it is not a question which interests him).

This ambiguity is also present in Josephus, though in a different way—he exploits it as part of the explanation of his historical narrative. Drawing on *2 Kings* 17, he describes in the *Antiquities* the arrival of the five nations into Samaria, explaining that they have their own gods, but at the same time worship the one true God, following instruction from an Israelite priest. He continues:[18]

> Even now they still continue to use the same manners, they who are called *Chouthaioi* according to the Hebrews' tongue, and *Samareitai* according to the Greeks'; whenever they see the Jews prospering they turn into kinsmen and call them back as if they were sprung from Joseph and thence had the beginning of kinship with the Jews; but whenever they see them fallen low, they say that they are in no way

[17] *CPJ* III n°513.

[18] Jos. *AJ* 9.290-1: χρώμενοί τε τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἔθεσι διατελοῦσιν οἱ κατὰ μὲν τὴν Ἑβραίων γλῶτταν Χουθαῖοι, κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἑλλήνων Σαμαρεῖται, οἳ πρὸς μεταβολὴν συγγενεῖς μὲν ὅταν εὖ πράττοντας βλέπωσι τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἀποκαλοῦσιν ὡς ἐξ Ἰωσήπου φύντες καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκεῖθεν τῆς πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἔχοντες οἰκειότητος, ὅταν δὲ πταίσαντας ἴδωσιν, οὐδαμόθεν αὐτοῖς προσήκειν λέγουσιν οὐδ' εἶναι δίκαιον οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς εὐνοίας ἢ γένους, ἀλλὰ μετοίκους ἀλλοεθνεῖς ἀποφαίνουσιν αὐτούς.

> related to them and that they have no right of goodwill or kinship, but they declare that they are resident aliens, foreigners.

This idea, that the Samaritans pretend to be Jews at times of Jewish prosperity, and distance themselves when the Jews are in trouble, is repeated later on in the *Antiquities* (11.8.6, where the Samaritans pretend to be Jews in order to gain the favour of Alexander); it is also borne out by many other episodes in the same work. Students of the Samaritans have often been keen to dismiss Josephus' narratives concerning the Samaritans as biased, but in this they err on the side of believing the testimony of Samaritan texts, that is, that the Samaritans are the true preservers of the Israelite priestly worship of Yahweh; none of these modern scholars seems to be at all favourably disposed towards pagan religion! Another approach is to discern Hellenizing and traditionalist Samaritan parties, in parallel with the presentation of the Jews of Jerusalem in *1 Maccabees* and by Josephus. In this case both groups had exactly the same reaction to the hellenizing tendencies of Seleucid imperial power—it just depends upon your point of view as to whether this reflects internecine struggle or the perfidy of the entire people. However, there is not a shred of evidence for the inner politics of the Samaritans in the early second century BC, and so this is apologetic speculation.

I am not suggesting that we take Josephus at face value, but I do think we should not try to explain away the ambiguity in these ancient presentations of the Samaritans. We will have no more success than the Rabbis did. Instead, we should try to integrate it into our picture of the Samaritans under Roman rule. While the Jews were known for their defeat at the hands of the Romans in AD 70 and were forced to pay the well-publicised *fiscus Iudaicus* as a consequence, the Samaritans had no such fame. The Jews were also known to be living all over the world, not limited to their homeland Judaea, to the extent that Jews in Rome also had to pay the tax. In contrast, there is scant evidence for a Samaritan Diaspora before the fourth century. Furthermore, the Jews were driven from their homes in Judaea following the Bar Kokhba revolt, another development which weakened the connection between the people and any particular geographical region. Finally, it should be noted that when Antoninus Pius rescinded the prohibition of circumcision for the Jews, it remained banned among the Samaritans. In all these ways we can see that while the Jews could be seen as a race apart, an oddity

among the various people groups of the empire, the Samaritans were much more like the Gauls, say, or the Maltese or Arabians—a people attached to the homeland inherent in their name, no doubt having their own native customs, but long influenced more or less strongly by contact with other cultures, specially Greek culture, and currently developing an accommodation between their own customs and those influences brought to bear through their presence in the wider empire.

Thus I want to propose that it is meaningless to ask 'was Simon Magus a Samaritan or a pagan?' The distinction robs the Samaritans of the ambiguous status that is inherent in the sources and, I propose, is a very real part of their position in the empire. I think it is not impossible that Justin's family had been present in Samaria for many generations, but even if his grandfather or father had arrived from distant climes as a result of the new Roman order in Samaria following the Jews' First Revolt, he clearly regards himself in some sense as a 'Samaritan' and should be treated by us as such. He is, at any rate, the only person from this period who claims to be a Samaritan and whose voice we can still hear. Granted, he was wholly hellenized in education and also a convert to Christianity by the time we meet him; but this does not mean we should automatically disqualify him. Rather we should ask how representative he was of the inhabitants of Samaria and what sort of religious variety was available to Samaritans of the time.

In order to investigate whether this discussion about the Samaritans is useful in approaching their history during the Roman empire, I propose to examine the archaeological evidence from the city of Neapolis and neighbouring Mt Gerizim. Both places, and their remains, are usually portrayed as 'pagan' (rather than 'Samaritan') under the Romans, but by ignoring the dichotomy between those two categories, which is generally used in approaching the material evidence, I wish to investigate instead whether we can detect the continuity of local religious practice in the religious development of the area over the first three centuries of our era.

The foundation of Neapolis, the Nablus of today, nestled in the valley between Mt Gerizim and Mt Ebal, was no grand event trumpeted in our sources. Two contemporaries, Pliny the Elder and Josephus, give us our first references to the place, explaining that its local name is Mamortha or Mabartha; this name would seem to refer to

the earlier settlement on the site—Hellenistic remains have been found, and this seemingly Semitic name disappears for ever after these two occurrences.[19] In fact, we only happen to know that the city was founded in the second half of AD 72 because the city's coins under Domitian are dated. The traditional picture of the city is summed up by Y. Magen, who wrote that it "was a pagan city in all respects—the names of its citizens, its institutions, and its rite."[20] Samaritans may have been present, he believed, but the Romans or gentiles were in control, for it was established under Vespasian as a military stronghold against the fear of Samaritan insurrection; just five years before the Samaritans rose up against the Romans during the Jewish Revolt, and over eleven thousand died as the Romans bloodily crushed them on Mt Gerizim, according to Josephus (*BJ* 3.307-15).

Certainly one can understand this point of view. If one is judging the evidence by the paradigm in which a basic distinction is to be made between Samaritan and pagan, there is much which we would automatically put in the latter category, as we shall see. But the picture is not easy to sustain if we look closely. For a start, it is suspicious that there is no evidence of a military presence in Neapolis until the reign of Trebonianus Gallus in the mid-third century, when a coin type bears the standard of the tenth legion. The contrast with Jerusalem is striking, for there we have immediate and abundant proof of the presence of the Roman army following the revolts. In fact, Vespasian had made Caesarea on the coast a military colony, and it seems much more likely that this was his main move in strengthening the Roman military presence in the area, for Neapolis is easily accessible from Caearea. A further point to note is that the location of Neapolis is not easily defensible, surrounded on north and south by higher ground; all attempts in the past to create fortified settlements had focused on Tell Balata, ancient Shechem, located just to the east where the valley opened up, or on top of Mt Gerizim, which housed a fortified city in the second century BC and was more generally the refuge of choice for revolting locals (and even on occasion harassed Roman troops).

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[19] Pliny *HN* 5.14: 'intus autem Samariae oppida Neapolis, quod antea Mamortha dicebatur'; Jos. *BJ* 4.449: Νέαν πόλιν καλουμένην Μαβαρθὰ δ'ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων.

[20] Magen (1993), p.145.

Even if there was some military component to the new city, we are not dealing here with the sudden and abrupt importation of a Graeco-Roman city into an alien environment, as an instrument of imperial rule in response to revolt. This is seen most clearly in the coins of Neapolis. Two issues were made in the 80s under Domitian, and there were four or five denominations, in descending order: laurel wreath; crossed cornucopiae; palm tree; two corn ears; vine branch.[21] The legend reads ΦΛΑΟΥΙ ΝΕΑΠΟΛΙ ΣΑΜΑΡΕ, 'Flavia Neapolis of Samaria', a proclamation of the city's links to the new dynasty which still emphasises its local identity. The types on the coins are also remarkable, since the later coinage of the city, in common with almost all other coins struck in Palestine under Roman rule, has as its major theme the various cults typical of the Roman empire. These Domitianic types hark back to the local coinage of previous dynasts such as the Hasmonaeans and the Herodians. They also have a parallel, among the Roman provincial coinages of the area, in the early issues of Sepphoris in the Galilee.[22] These types of image, signifying in general terms agricultural prosperity, have usually been understood as reflecting a desire to avoid the human figure and in particular references to religious cults, in line with Jewish sensibilities. Sepphoris, as a well known Jewish centre, initially began with neutral images and only later in the second century started coining types of Graeco-Roman cults, such as that of Capitoline Jupiter. The same process is evident in Neapolis, where the Domitianic coinage surely reflects the religious sensibilities of the populace, who are not a group of veteran soldiers or imported Greeks, but rather the original inhabitants of the place, the Samaritans of the Second Temple Period.

[21] The issues were in AD 82/3 and 86/7, see *RPC* II, 2218-25.

[22] Thus Sepphoris' earliest issue, under Trajan, consists of four denominations. In descending order by weight, these are denoted by the following reverse types: laurel wreath (*BMC Palestine*, n^{os}1-4); date palm (ibid., n^{os}5-11); caduceus (ibid., n^{os}12-6); two barley ears (ibid., n^{os}17-20). The next issue, under Antoninus Pius, depicts a standing Tyche figure within a tetrastyle building (ibid., n^{os}21-5). The coinage of Tiberias shows a similar pattern, though the issues in question are earlier. Thus the issue under Claudius bears a wreath enclosing the city's name, while the next one, struck under Trajan at some point between AD 98 and 103, shows a Fortuna-figure and Hygieia on the two larger examples, and a palm branch with cornucopiae on a smaller coin. By contrast, Caesarea Maritima is producing coins with the Tyche figure already under Nero and Domitian; Scythopolis strikes a similar type under Nero, and Sebaste the same under Domitian.

After a break, the coinage of the city resumes again under Antoninus Pius, and thenceforth it is one of the most abundant coinages in Palestine, until its end in the second half of the third century. This second period is certainly marked by the abundance of gods putting in an appearance, from Serapis to Hygieia and Asclepius, Jupiter Heliopolitanus and a version of Artemis of the Ephesians. A definite shift has occurred. But we must remember that Sepphoris too became more pagan in terms of its coinage, though there was no great change of populations there in the Roman period, and it continued to increase in importance as a centre of Rabbinic Judaism. In Neapolis these various gods on the coins are dominated by one image above all, that of Mt Gerizim, topped with a temple. Instantly recognisable, the portrait of the mountain shows on the left a staircase leading up from a broad portico at the mountain's foot to the temple on the left summit, while a higher summit on the right is topped by a small tower or an altar. A road leads up in the middle of the mountain and, bifurcating, arrives at both summits. On some coins various small installations can be seen either side of the stairway. Archaeological exploration has revealed both the stairway and the temple, while the right peak is apparently identifiable with the highest point on Mt Gerizim, the later site of a Byzantine church which has obliterated most archaeological traces beneath it. A concentration of massive red Aswan granite columns has been found at the base of the staircase, and others still prop up mosques throughout modern Nablus; these may well be traces of the portico. Back on the coins, the mountain clearly has pride of place among the city's cults, and in some way no doubt also stands as the city's symbol. Thus we find Mt Gerizim being borne aloft on eagle's wings, or held up by a Nike figure in a victory wreath; when Elagabalus introduces a surprised Rome and the rest of its empire to the cult of the holy stone of Emesa, other cities strike coins with the stone carried in a chariot, but Neapolis strikes a horse-drawn chariot in which the stone and Mt Gerizim, looking remarkably similar, ride as equals, side by side. The Genius of the Roman colony of Caesarea Maritima, a type of Tyche figure, is ubiquitous on the coins of Palestine. She duly makes her appearance in Neapolis, although here, instead of carrying in her right hand the bust of the emperor, as is usual, she is, perhaps predictably, holding Mt Gerizim. The immediate parallel for this behaviour which comes to my mind is the cult of Mt Argaeus in

Caesarea in Cappadocia, where the mountain is a recurring motif on the coins of the Roman period. Here, this represents the proud continuation of native cult under Roman rule, for the cult of Mt Argaeus was one promoted by the kings of Cappadocia in their capital city before Roman takeover. I can think of no parallels among Graeco-Roman cities; Corinth, which had been resettled as a Roman military colony in the first century BC, did strike a coin depicting the traditional acropolis, the Acrocorinth, with its famous temple of Aphrodite on its peak, but this was an exceptional issue and is a far cry from the obsession afforded Mt Gerizim by the moneyers of Neapolis.

The history of the temple is somewhat contentious from an archaeological point of view. The *Survey of Western Palestine* notices the mound and foundations of the temple in the 1880s, but does not know what to make of them.[23] It is only in the 1960s that R. Bull's excavations revealed the foundations of a standard Roman temple, 21 by 14 m, on the spur of Tell er-Ras, dramatically overlooking Nablus. The debris of its last period of occupation contained many fourth-century coins, as well as two inscriptions, one on a small limestone pillar, one on a copper sheet, dedicated to Zeus Olympios, who thus seems to be the occupant of the temple. So far straightforward enough. There are apparently two main building phases. The later phase consists of Bull's building A, the temple foundations reinforced with the liberal use of concrete, a standard Roman imperial structure. But beneath this phase lies temple B, a massive semi-cube of unhewn stone, stacked without bonding material and sitting on the bedrock. It is 20 x 20 m, and 10 m tall. Bull dated this phase on the basis of earth fill used in its construction to the early Hellenistic period.[24]

This is significant because Josephus describes the erection of a temple on Mt Gerizim during the Hellenistic period. As he tells it (*AJ* 11.306-12 and 321-5), the Persian governor of Samaria, Sanballat, builds it for his son-in-law Manasseh, a renegade priest from Jerusalem; this takes place at the time of Alexander. Later (*AJ* 12.257-64) Josephus relates how the Samaritans write to Antiochus IV, asking him to realise that they are not Jews and to allow them

[23] Conder and Kitchener (1881-3), II, p.189.
[24] These excavations are summarised in Bull (1978).

to adopt Greek customs and to dedicate their temple, hitherto anonymous, to Zeus Hellenios. Permission is granted. Later still, John Hyrcanus leaves the temple desolate in the course of his campaigns, two hundred years, says Josephus (*AJ* 13.254-8), after Sanballat built it. There are various problems with Josephus' narrative, but it has been most often dismissed simply because it evinces Jewish anti-Samaritan rhetoric. However, the characteristic ambiguity is present in Josephus' notices about this temple. Thus he has the Samaritans and Jews disputing before Ptolemy VI Philometor in mid-second-century Alexandria over which temple is built in accordance with the law of Moses. The Jews win and the Samaritan representatives are executed, apparently before they have the chance to put their arguments, but at least here Josephus is acknowledging that part of the ideology of the temple is that it derives from the Pentateuch (*AJ* 13.74-9). Again, as he relates the desolation wrought by John Hyrcanus, he notes that the temple is built like the temple in Jerusalem. An interesting corroboration for Josephus' story about the Samaritans' letter to Antiochus is found in *2 Maccabees* (6:1-2), where Antiochus dispatches an Athenian senator to compel the Jews to abandon their ancestral and divine laws and to dedicate their temple to Olympian Zeus and that at Gerizim to Zeus Xenios, Zeus the hospitable or protector of strangers. The writer adds that the people who lived in the place had already given it that name.

So Bull would like to see in this platform of stones the foundations of the Hellenistic temple, recorded in these sources. As a caution it should be noted that later sources carry the tradition that there was never a Samaritan temple on Mt Gerizim. Only one Samaritan source, Abu 'l Fatḥ, has a temple built, and that at a much later, Byzantine date, and Procopius of Caesarea (*de Aed.* 5.7) specifically denies that the Samaritans ever built a temple there, explaining that they worship the mountain itself. Y. Magen has recently reexcavated on top of Tell er-Ras, and has also revealed the remains of the substantial fortified city on the main peak of Mt Gerizim. He contended that the Tell er-Ras temple is entirely Roman.[25] The Hellenistic fill, he explained, was transported from the site of the Hellenistic city to build the first temple under Antoninus Pius. Magen's dating of this first phase seems to be based on the first

[25] Magen (1993), p.123f.

appearance of the Mt Gerizim motif on a coin of that emperor, which Magen regards as a commemorative issue recording the temple's construction. As for the second phase, he puts that in the early second century, possibly to be dated to Caracalla; the rationale behind this is that the *Historia Augusta* records that Neapolis was punished by Septimius Severus for its support for his rival Pescennius Niger. As it happens, Neapolis issued no coins in Severus' name, but they resume again, proudly featuring Mt Gerizim, under Severus' son Caracalla.[26] It is unfortunate that neither Bull nor Magen have issued final reports, and it would be especially interesting to see if Magen has any more substantial evidence for his redating. Incidentally, he wished to place the Hellenistic Samaritan temple in the middle of his Hellenistic city on the main peak. As I have noted above, the later Byzantine church has obliterated earlier traces, but as it is in the middle of an irregularly shaped monumental enclosure of the Hellenistic period, Magen's reading is possible. It is also on this main peak that the Samaritans have their focus of cultic activity today.

Clearly, I would like to see Bull's building B as evidence for continuity of the sanctity from the Hellenistic to the Roman periods. I think Magen's redating is unconvincing and it seems extraordinary that the Antonine temple, looking so normally Roman in its three-dimensional representations on the coins, should have such a peculiar foundation, especially when contrasted with the normal Roman construction of temple A. However, I can claim to be no expert at interpreting 20 m square blocks of solid unbonded unhewn stones, and in all events this structure will prove difficult to interpret. I would like to suggest that its prominence on Mt Gerizim and its probable Hellenistic date imply some strong religious significance at this earlier period and thus a continuity into the Roman period. It should be noted that if the earlier temple was on the main peak, then it would seem to correspond to the altar or tower on the coins. It has been suggested that the coins depict here the ruins of the Samaritan temple; the coin would thus show the triumph of the Roman pagan

[26] SHA *Sev.* 9.5 reports that Severus took away Neapolis' *ius civitatis*; ibid. 14.6 records that he later remitted the punishments meted out against the *Palaestini*. It seems likely that coins in the name of Domna (and maybe also some in the name of Caracalla) were issued during Severus' reign, maybe after the punishment was withdrawn. Perhaps the most lucid account of the evidence for Severus' relations with Neapolis and Sebaste is Kushnir-Stein (2000).

temple over the destroyed Samaritanism of the past, but this possibility would be as remarkable as it is apologetic. Another suggestion is that an altar is depicted and that this is the Samaritan altar, an important element in Samaritan sources from their version of the Pentateuch onward. It also coincides with the place where today's Samaritans sacrifice Pesaḥ lambs every year. I would find the juxtaposition of Samaritan and Graeco-Roman cult on the one image fascinating and unparalleled, but this reading is still based on the dichotomy between Pagan and Samaritan, which I believe is not applicable in our reading of the evidence.

While on the subject of Samaritan sacrifices, it is worth mentioning that Y. Meshorer has interpreted some of the coins of Neapolis as referring to specific features of Samaritan ritual. Thus on one he saw the sacrifice of Isaac (whose location to the southeast of the main peak of Mt Gerizim will be pointed out by Samaritans today), and on another type a 'Decanos' is depicted and thus labelled—this Meshorer saw as one of the figures of Samaritan eschatology as preserved in their textual tradition.[27] One type shows three priests surrounding the Paschal lamb, with Zeus Hypsistos standing on the left greeting them and with Mt Gerizim towering over the whole group.[28] Although such interpretations must be subjective, especially since the ritual and ideology preserved in Samaritan texts is not likely to correspond to whatever form of local cult flourished in Roman Neapolis, it is true that these coin types are indeed peculiar. They evidently refer to particular religious rituals, and such types are notably absent from the evidence for cities such as Caesarea, Sebaste and Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem) itself, which can be viewed as Graeco-Roman cities reflecting an empire-wide religious koine; the Neapolis types are better interpreted as reflecting distinctive local religious customs, which have nothing to do with the foundation of a Graeco-Roman city by the Flavian dynasty.

One coin type which is incontrovertibly linked to the pagan religious koine of the empire depicts Artemis of Ephesus, who appears on coins issued in the name of Faustina the Younger. As G. Hill pointed out, these detailed types correspond to the standard representations of the Ephesian deity, except for a small difference on

[27] Meshorer (1987), p.94.
[28] Id. (2003), p.194-5.

some of the coins.[29] This is that, at the top of each of the fillet-like sceptres descending from the goddess' hands, can be seen a bird, conventionally called a dove. These birds reappear much later, in the coinage of Trebonianus Gallus, where they share the reverse type with Fortuna, Mt Gerizim and the Roman She-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus. In this later coin the doves appear again in a pair, each poking out from a small temple-like building. In both cases the dove has been linked to the cult of Atargatis, the Dea Syria of Lucian, whose influence pervaded the area of greater Syria.[30] Thus, the addition of the doves is seen as a natural way of accommodating Ephesian Artemis in the Levant. However, the cult of Atargatis is otherwise unattested at Neapolis, so it is perhaps surprising that here of all places in Palestine and Syria we should find Artemis adopting an aspect of her iconography. In fact, outside the numismatic evidence, small birds appear in only two Neapolitan contexts known to me, both linked to local Samaritan cult. The Jerusalem Talmud tries to explain why the wine of the Samaritans is prohibited (when in principle the Samaritans can be trusted to obey purity and food laws). One explanation is that Diocletian ordered his subjects to make libation, excepting only the Jews; the Samaritans did as they were told. Another attempt claims that the Samaritans pour libations to a dove.[31] Whatever the truth of this claim, the choice of a dove does not seem to be significant in polemical terms and may reflect some sort of knowledge of local religious practice in Samaria. Small birds made their other appearance during Y. Magen's excavations of the summit of Mt Gerizim, where he reported, in the western part of his sacred precinct, traces of fire with bones of cattle, pigeons and (mainly) sheep and goats.[32] They date to the Hellenistic period, and this distribution of animals is entirely in line with that prescribed in the Torah. Clearly, the appearance of small birds in material evidence of the second century BC, coins of the second and third centuries AD, and polemical texts redacted around AD 400,

[29] Hill (1911-2), p.417.

[30] Ibid., p.418. Cf. Lightfoot (2003), index s.v. 'dove'.

[31] *'Abodah Zara* 5.4: 'When Diocletian the king came up here he issued a decree, saying, "Every nation must offer a libation, except for the Jews." So the Samaritans made a libation and the sages prohibited their wine. And there are those who wish to explain the prohibition [against Samaritan wine] thus: they have a kind of dove to which they offer libations' (Neusner's translation).

[32] Naveh and Magen (1997), p.9*.

cannot neatly provide a coherent narrative of religious cult for this whole period. Nonetheless, Neapolis' unusual coin types can be read as the product of a distinctive local religious culture, a culture which may be continuous in some ways with the Samaritan cult of the Second Temple Period and in which the religious activities of the *Kutim*, as reflected in Rabbinic sources, played an integral part.

We would very much like to know who lived in Neapolis. We have a few names. A group of limestone seats was discovered by a Nablusi in the 1920s, each inscribed with a name.[33] We have Bernicianus son of Ioustinus, Iustus son of Marcellus, Martys (a woman), Iustus, Iustinus, Iustus Romanus, Iulius, Boubas, Frontinas, Priscus, and Iulianus. This selection immediately reminds us of Justin Martyr, for indeed one of them is a Justin and another a Priscus (his father's name); although we have no Baccheius we have a fair scattering of Greek names too. Many of these names are characteristic of Romanised Jews, Iustus being one of the most popular in this context, Priscus as well. There is also the definite impression of Roman patronage here, with one Iustus identifying himself as Romanus, and two names linked to the earliest imperial dynasty, the Iulii, who were prominent patrons in the area both directly and through the Herodian dynasty. Alternatively, if we date the inscriptions to the latter part of the third century, we could see the patronage of the emperor Philip, who made Neapolis a colony. Thus I would see in this nomenclature a population of locals who have not totally assimilated to the prevailing Graeco-Roman culture, but who, like contemporary Jews, have adopted Hellenistic and Roman names to reflect their accommodation within the imperial framework. Some of the seats simply bear names, but we also read 'Bernicianus son of Ioustinus made a vow and dedicated (this)', and 'I, Priscus made a vow and dedicated (this)'. The purpose of these seats is a mystery. They seem to be arranged in two semicircular rows facing a courtyard. We have no idea to whom they are dedicated, and the reticence in revealing the recipient may be significant. Such language is unparalleled among later Samaritan inscriptions, but among ostensibly Jewish inscriptions

[33] Fitzgerald (1929); for these inscriptions see also *SEG* 8.120-30: Βερνικιανὸς Ἰουστί/νου εὐξάμενος ανέ/θηκα ; Ἰοῦστυς / Μαρκέλου ; Μάτρυς εὐξαμένη ; Ἰοῦστος ; Ἰουστί/νου ; Ἰοῦστος / Ῥομάνυς ; [Ἰ]οῦλις εὐ/[ξά]μενος ανέ/[θηκα --]συ / -- υλ -- / ONTAT -- ; βουβας ; Φροτίνας ; Πρίσκυς / εὐξάμε/νος ἔθηκα ; Ἰουλιανός.

we find a fair degree of vowing or dedicating, usually of parts of synagogues, for example columns and mosaics. Interestingly, the only Jewish context in which the formula of vowing and dedicating together is used regularly, is in the manumission inscriptions of the first and second centuries from the Crimea. Here the slave to be freed is vowed and dedicated to the *proseuche* and to Theos Hypsistos.[34]

Graves surround Neapolis, mausolea filled with so-called Samaritan sarcophagi. Unfortunately few are inscribed, but a splendid exception is found in the lavish mausoleum at Askar (possibly ancient Sychar), northeast of Neapolis beneath the eastern slopes of Mt Ebal. The sarcophagus in question proclaims its inhabitants to be *Ioustou Ioustou Theophilou ktistou kai Archelaeidos Simonos Alexandrou sunbiou*. Justus son of Justus son of Theophilus, the founder of the tomb and thus a man of substance, has a name which again reminds us of Justin Martyr. Archelaeis is a good Hellenistic name, also borne in masculine form by one of Herod the Great's heirs. Simon and Alexander are popular names for Jews of the Roman period, even among Rabbinic circles; Simon has the advantage of being both Greek and Hebrew, while Alexander the Great played a prominent and generally positive role in Jewish tradition in general and Rabbinic tradition in particular. It has already been suggested by others that this tomb thus contains Romanised Samaritans.[35]

In the interests of balance, I should introduce one or two elements which will seem to us as more evidently pagan. It should be remembered that Neapolis was a prosperous city which shared the amenities of other cities of the Empire. In the second century it gained a theatre and a stadium, part of which was converted into an amphitheatre. In the theatre, divisions were marked for the eleven *phylae* of the city, reflecting its Greek constitution which it no doubt gained in AD 72. The *phylae* are named after gods (thus, for example, Herakleis), though one is named for Antiochus and another, apparently, for Phlious, which was as far as I know a small town in the Peloponnese.[36] The constitution is found in an inscription from Ephesus in which, through two *presbeutai* and *epimeletai* of Neapolis, Flavius Iun-

[34] See Levinskaya (1996), p.105-16 and p.229-42.
[35] See Pummer (1989), p.153.
[36] Magen (1984), who mentioned (in translation only) an inscription on a seat, and printed a photo, whence can be read, at p.275, φυλ / ήρακληιδος.

cus and Ulpius Proclus, the *boule* and the *demos* of the 'Flavian Neapolitan Samarians' honoured Pompeius Falco with a statue. Falco was *procurator* of Judaea in AD 105-7, and the inscription dates to AD 123/4.[37] Neapolitans can do pagan things in other cities too. Three inscriptions from Tomis on the Black Sea honour natives of Neapolis who served as *pontarch* in Tomis and gave games in that capacity.[38] For example, an inscription from the reign of Severus Alexander honours one Aurelius Priscius Isidorus and his wife Ulpia Matrona with a statue; he was *archon* and High Priest in Tomis and gave gladiatorial and hunting games for six days; at the same time he managed to be a *bouleutes* and one of the first citizens of Neapolis and Antipatris. His wife, incidentally, was a high priestess.[39] Whether there was a political exchange scheme going on between Tomis and Neapolis I do not know, but at any rate we see that a Neapolitan and Roman citizen has no trouble in taking part in the social and international networks which traversed the empire, and this was adumbrated by the availability to Justin of a Greek education in foreign cities. We see no trace of any native cultural origins in Aurelius Priscius Isidorus.

Concluding Remarks

I would like to finish with a foreign visitor to Neapolis. In 1883 a beautiful marble tripod base was discovered in Nablus, 4 m down and just beneath the slopes of Mt Gerizim (we can thus locate its find spot at least near the portico on the coins).[40] It features six relief scenes, all but one helpfully labelled in Greek: Demeter mounting her serpent-driven chariot, Heracles standing over a defeated Acheloüs, baby Heracles killing Juno's snakes, Theseus discovering his father's shoes and sword under the rock, the Delphic triad with the

[37] *I.Ephesos* 3.112 (n°713): Κοΐντον Ῥώσκιου Μου/ρήνα Κουέλλον Πομ/πήιον Φάλκωνα πρεσ/βευτὴν σεβαστοῦ καὶ ἀντιστράτηγον Λυκίας καὶ / Παμφυλίας καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ Μυσίας καὶ Βρεταννίας / καὶ πολλὰς ἄλλας ἡγεμονίας / διατελέσαντα, Ἀσίας ἀνθύ/πατον ἐτείμησεν Φλαουι/έων Νεαπολειτῶν Σαμαρέ/ων ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος τὸν / σωτῆρα καὶ εὐεργέτην / διὰ πρεσβευτῶν καὶ ἐπιμελητῶν / Φλαουίου Ἰούνκου καὶ Οὐλπίου Πρόκλου.

[38] *IScM* II.2.188; II.2.97; II.2.96.

[39] *IScM* II.2.96.

[40] The most ample description is given in Mendel (1914), p.385.

slain snake Pytho, and Theseus and the Minotaur. The theme is hard to discern, and was described at the time as "athla von Göttern und Heroen" by T. Schreiber.[41] One thing is clear: the theme is Athenian. Theseus was entirely Athenian, and Heracles was important in Athens too; Delphi played a significant role in Athens' mythology, and Demeter suggests the Mysteries at Eleusis. Two further inscriptions give more information. The first one states that 'M. Aurelius Pyrrus […] from the deme Melite, an Athenian, a councillor, made the tripod'[42]:

> Μ(αρκος) Αὐρ(ηλιος) Πύρ/ρος Μ.../ΝΟΣΤΩΝ/...ω / Μελιτεὺς / Ἀθηναῖος / [β]ουλευτὴς / τὸν τρίπο/δα ἐποίει

The other is in verse, and the first line is missing; it refers to a person whose name ends '-onios'; this man 'dedicated it, bringing it from Athens, since it was by far the best among all tripods, superior in beauty and size and in its graces; and Dionysus rejoices in it and delights to see his tripod in the enclosure of his father':

> [--- --- ---]
> [---]όνιος θῆκεν Ἀτθιδος ἐγκομίσας
> [οὕ]νεκεν ἐν τριπόδεσσιν ἀριστε[ύ]εσκεν ἅπασιν
> κάλλει καὶ μεγέθει καὶ χάρισιν προφέρων
> τούτωι καὶ Διόνυσος ἀγάλλεται κἀπιγέγηθεν
> ὃν τρίποδ' εἰσορόων οὗ πατρὸς ἐν τε[μένε]ι

We should probably date this object to the third century, and certainly no earlier than the 160s. It has been suggested that the tripod was originally set up in Athens, perhaps commemorating a victory in games, and then transferred to Neapolis.[43] However, it is strange that the artist signed himself as an Athenian if he thought the tripod was to be set up in Athens; the ethnic is only added by artists on objects displayed away from home. It is thus very hard to see how the tripod belongs to Dionysus, and indeed Dionysus' cult is not attested in Neapolis (in contrast to nearby Nysa-Scythopolis[44]). He was, however, a very important figure in Athens. As to his father,

[41] Schreiber (1884), p.137.

[42] Mendel (1914), p.389, read Μ. Αὐρ. Πύρ/ρος Μ.../..νοστων../ ... η..ω / [Μ]ε[λ]ιτεὺς / Ἀθη[να]ῖος / [β]ουλευτὴς / τὸν τρίπο/δα ἐποίει.

[43] Reisch (1890), p.98-9. The idea that the tripod was dedicated twice was followed by Fischer (1998), p.157.

[44] Lichtenberger (2003), p.135-41 and p.145-52.

this is of course Zeus, and we can suppose that the unknown Athenian dedicator brought the tripod across the sea to the famous temple of Zeus Olympios on Mt Gerizim. This might suggest that the tripod originally stood on the peak, and it would not be hard to envisage it descending the steep slope at some point in its history. Given that the sculptor was both a Roman citizen and a councillor of Athens, one is bound to think of the hapless Athenian Senator of *2 Maccabees*, sent by the imperial power of his day to convince the Jerusalemites that they wanted a temple dedicated to Zeus, just like the people on Mt Gerizim. No doubt this is a coincidence, but it reminds us that the Samaritans and other inhabitants of Palestine were fully exposed to the wider cultural and religious currents of the Hellenistic and Roman worlds over many centuries, and we should not simply look for moments of imperial oppression in order to explain a degree of cultural assimilation.

Thus I would like to see the Athenian tripod as an expression of how the local cult in Samaria, centred around Mt Gerizim, maintained its own identity within the wider Roman empire and could even interact on its own terms with Greeks and Romans. I hope to have demonstrated that the local Samaritans played a key part in this maintenance of local religious identity. Of course, there existed what we would see as more orthodox Samaritans, who preserved the Pentateuch (so that Origen could consult it in the early third century) and out of whom came Baba Rabba and his reforms of the third or fourth century. It was these reforms which denied that the Samaritan religion was represented by the civic cults of Neapolis, or the Christianity that took over; indeed denied that a Samaritan temple had ever stood on Mt Gerizim. However, it is only after this point that it is meaningful to sort the pagans from the Samaritans; we must realise that matters were very different on the holy mountain before Baba Rabba came along.

MAN AND GOD AT PALMYRA: SACRIFICE, *LECTISTERNIA* AND BANQUETS*

TED KAIZER

The evidence for the religious life of Palmyra is very limited. Liturgical texts, prayers or written myths are not handed down, and what the Palmyrenes actually 'believed' remains a mystery. But 'Palmyrene religion' was also, like other religions, comprised of a large number of ritual practices, and there is sufficient evidence, both textual and visual, to sketch out the 'rhythm of religious life' of the city.[1] Neither the particular iconographic material (revealing both a high degree of individuality and certain connections with the so-called 'Parthian' art of the wider region of East Syria and North Mesopotamia) nor the unique language situation (providing information, always in a highly formulaic manner, on deities and dedications both in Greek and in the local 'Palmyrenean' dialect of Aramaic) seem to have resulted in any interest in Palmyra on the part of the Classical authors. Nonetheless, it are precisely the local Palmyrene forms of art and script, both very recognizable, that have served to evoke impressions of a homogeneous and typically 'Palmyrene' identity. Of course, underneath the surface the problem is much more complicated. The different elements of the religious life of Palmyra come from various cultural backgrounds, with the indigenous substratum (mostly no longer traceable) being transformed, or 'renegotiated',

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[1] Kaizer (2002a), p.163-211.

over time. Together, these elements constituted a religious society which necessarily remained heterogeneous throughout its history, and the various ritual practices of the city combined aspects deriving from a more or less remote and often legendary past with aspects reflecting the more recent conditions that had served to make those rituals have the shape in which they were eventually transmitted. Indeed, studies of the religious world of Palmyra have always pointed to this interaction of various layers, which is visibly mainly in the divine world and in the city's religious topography.[2] On the one hand, this process resulted in a unique religious culture, with a divine world inhabited by a large variety of indigenous and other 'Oriental' deities, whose identification with Greek ones in bilingual inscriptions is usually seen as of secondary importance.[3] On the other hand, it is clear that in the Roman period Palmyra conformed to general patterns of religious culture, which were representative for many cities in the Graeco-Roman East. These Classical frameworks, such as the apparent connection between territorial division and public cults, and the symbolic language of the phenomenon known as 'euergetism', will have had a certain significance for the functioning in society of religious aspects from outside the Classical world, and also for the manifestation and articulation of the attitude on the part of the Palmyrene worshippers towards their deities.[4]

The relationship between the human and the divine spheres could find ritual expression in many different ways at Palmyra. This paper will concentrate on various sorts of sacrifice, *lectisternia* and banquets, and it will make suggestions as to why these divergent means of exchange of material and immaterial matters between man and god were applied in particular circumstances. Palmyrene deities were the focal point of multifarious sacred acts and the recipients of many sorts of sacrifice. As far as the visual evidence is concerned, the most common ritual acts were the burning of incense and (less frequent) the libation. Many reliefs show a worshipper standing in front of a deity, while either taking incense granules out of a specially designed box and burning them in a θυμιατήριον, or pouring out liquid from

[2] From Février (1931), via Hoftijzer (1968) and Teixidor (1979), to Gawlikowski (1990) and Dirven (1999).

[3] Gawlikowski (1991).

[4] For this idea, with further references, see Kaizer (2004a).

a bowl or a jar over a small stone altar.[5] Other documentary material and monuments enable us to create a more complete tableau of the sacred acts which were performed in the city. Two new sarcophagi from the north necropolis of Palmyra show a central figure, who is making a libation over an altar, being flanked by six attendants.[6] Some of those are carrying, again, jars and bowls, but others are holding a small bird, a dish piled high with fruit, or even a young bull. Unlike the burning of incense and the libation, these representations point to forms of sacrifice in which either seasonal gifts are offered to the deity or blood of animals is shed.

In his standard work on Greek religion, W. Burkert referred to the libation as "a first fruit offering in its negative aspect. What is important is not that the libation reaches its destination, but that the offerer surrenders himself to a higher will in the act of serene wastefulness."[7] Building on this, P. Veyne placed emphasis on the notional difference between 'sacrificing' something from oneself in honour of a god and 'sacrificing' something to a god in the shape of a gift to that god.[8] Veyne drew attention to the numerous images known from Classical Greek art which show a deity holding a libation bowl. In the past, these had been explained as representations of how "dans la tradition gréco-romaine, les dieux sacrifiants exemplifient la *pietas* envers les dieux", of how the gods set the example for their human worshippers.[9] As such, the 'offer' brought by a god or goddess would be comparable with the enigmatic category of 'dedications made by the deities themselves', known by a dozen or so inscriptions from Palmyra, Hatra, and elsewhere in the Near East.[10] This formula may

[5] Incense: Drijvers (1976), pl.III.2; VI; IX.2; X.2; XII; XV.2 (similarly on frescoes from Dura-Europos: ibid. pl.XVIII-XIX). Libation: ibid. pl.XXXIX; Ingholt (1935), pl.XXVII.2; XXXIV.2.

[6] The two sarcophagi, at present on display in the Museum of Palmyra (Inv. 2723B/9160) and in the garden of the museum (Inv. 2677B/8983), will be published by A. Schmidt-Colinet and Kh. al-As'ad in the proceedings of the last meeting of the *Sarkophag-Corpus*. See Kaizer (2002a), pl.IV-VI.

[7] Burkert (1985), p.72.

[8] Veyne (1990), p.26.

[9] Thus Turcan (1981), p.360. Quoted by Veyne (1990), p.18.

[10] The phenomenon formed the subject of the erudite work by Milik (1972), who collected an immense amount of material but did not actually explain it. I have recently tried to analyze the formula by drawing attention to the fact that in two cases the Greek counterpart directly refers to a divine command in the form of an oracle, see Kaizer (2004a), p.172-5.

well imply that a certain dedicated object (usually a statue or an altar) was partly financed by temple funds, but it could equally be applied in a purely *symbolic* manner. In both cases, the special mention of a deity in the recording of the act of dedicating the object would certainly have added to the occasion. With regard to the libation, however, Veyne proposed to disconnect the act from any sacrificial offer in the context of worship: according to his theory, the libation was a necessary performance that would facilitate the entrance to the 'sacred zone' in which the actual sacrifice could take place accordingly, enabling the members of both the human and the divine spheres to participate.[11] Perhaps a similar point could be made for the burning of incense, in the words of Burkert "the most widespread, simplest, and also cheapest act of offering."[12] Naturally, the precise organization of worship through sacrifice at Palmyra remains unknown, but one knows from elsewhere in the Roman Near East how the offering of incense could serve to frame the daily burnt offerings which were brought in the temples.[13] In any case, it is highly unlikely that worshippers would use incense—an act of bloodless piety in the same degree as the dedication of candles and lamps[14]—in order to save money or time. According to Palmyrene reliefs (and also frescoes from a Palmyrene context in Dura-Europos[15]) burning incense was the most popular ritual act to define piety, and this can only be explained if it fulfilled a certain role in the formation of religious identity: to be a Palmyrene was to worship the ancestral deities by strewing granules of frankincense from a box over a fire-altar.

It is known from elsewhere in the ancient world that the burning of incense was often interwoven with the utterance of prayer. But it

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[11] Veyne (1990), p.17-30.

[12] Burkert (1985), p.62.

[13] E.g. Philo, *Spec. Leg.* I.35 (171) and I.51 (276), with Schürer, *HJP* II (1979), p.302-3, with n.39. Note also how the author of *De Dea Syria* (30) describes the temple at Hierapolis as bringing forth 'an ambrosial odour, like the one supposed to come from the land of Arabia' (ἀπόζει δὲ αὐτοῦ ὀδμὴ ἀμβροσίη ὁκοίη λέγεται τῆς χώρης τῆς Ἀραβίης). See Lightfoot (2003), p.432-3. Compare the classic volume by Atchley (1909).

[14] An example of the dedication of a lamp at Palmyra, to which deity remains unfortunately unknown, is the fragmentary Greek text published by Seyrig (1939c), p.319-20, nº23. Cf. Kaizer (2002a), p.255.

[15] See the appendix on 'Archaeological remains of Palmyrene culture in Dura-Europos' in Dirven (1999), p.196-334.

remains of course unknown whether at Palmyra it was linked in any way to notions of (spiritual) purification or atonement. There is a small group of Palmyrenean cultic regulations (none of which with a Greek counterpart), but these texts do not specify any conditions of purity which were required in order to have access to sacred places and to participate in ritual occasions.[16] The only indications of issues related to purification are the *lustratio* basin, built in the temenos of the temple of Bel and similar to those which are known to have been situated in other temple complexes in the region,[17] and two possible references to something connected with fasting.[18] With regard to the latter, however, it needs to be added that the observance of a set of regulations with regard to 'religious diets' at Palmyra is not necessarily to be explained in the context of purificatory conditions, nor even as atonement.[19]

If the sacrificial status of both the libation and the burning of incense is debatable, we are on firmer ground when discussing some of the above-mentioned figures on the new sarcophagi. The attendants carrying a dish filled with fruit may be placed in the same league as a possible reference to 'first fruit offerings' in a fragmentary Greek inscription from 6 April, AD 163, one hundred and thirty-one years to the day since the inauguration of the new *haikela* of Bel.[20] Both the inscription (in which a burnt offering is recorded alongside the mention of fruits) and the iconographic context of the sarcophagi seems to connect the offering of fruit with proper animal sacrifice. It is plausible that first fruit offerings stood on their own in certain cults, but our evidence is limited.[21] Other attendants are

[16] For a list of these so-called 'sacred laws', with a brief discussion, see Kaizer (2002a), p.167-77. The exception to this rule would have been a possible ban on bloodshed in the temple of Allat, see Hillers and Cussini (1996), n°1122 [henceforth *PAT*], with Gawlikowski (1990), p.2641, although the precise context of this graffito, inscribed on the large sculpture of a lion with an antelope between its front legs, remains unclear.

[17] Freyberger (1998), Taf.58c-d (Palmyra) and Beil.38 (comparative plans of some of the grand temples of the Roman Near East).

[18] Firstly, a possible reference to the 'order of the fast' in a fragmentary Palmyrenean 'sacred law', see *PAT* 2767, with Gawlikowski (1974), p.98-9. Secondly, a mention of something 'of the fast' in a damaged Greek inscription, see Seyrig (1933), p.276.

[19] Kaizer (2002a), p.185-91.

[20] *Inv.* VI.13, with Kaizer (2002a), p.207-8.

[21] See also Kaizer (2002a), p.181. A number of funerary reliefs show a deceased priest holding a dish of fruits in his left hand, and usually an *alabastron* in his right:

carrying a small bird. Birds, especially pigeons, are believed to have been amongst the most frequent sacrificial victims in the West-Semitic world: like small lambs, they could be carried easily, especially upstairs. It is known that three narrow staircases led to the roof of the temple of Bel from within, and it seems to be unlikely that any victims which were not small and light were carried to the top in order to be sacrificed on the roof.[22]

The reliefs on the new sarcophagi also show an attendant, with a dagger in his right hand, leading a young bull. It will be clear that the slaughtering of larger animals on a massive scale could not take place in every temple, since an elaborate complex centred on a huge sacrificial altar would be needed to accommodate this. Indeed, as far as our archaeological evidence is concerned, the preconditions for ritual slaughtering on a grand scale were present only at the temple of Bel. In addition to the large altar platform and adjacent dining hall with kitchen annexe in front of the cella, the complex consisted of a ramp along which the victims were led into the temenos.[23] From the temple of Bel also comes an enigmatic Palmyrenean inscription from 6 BC, which seems to record the dedication of a 'slaughtering place' to three other deities who received a cult together, Herta, Nanai and Reshef. But whether this structure was situated in the temenos of the temple of Bel or elsewhere in the city remains unclear.[24]

Most public sacrifice in the ancient world would involve some sort of distribution of the meat afterwards. As such, public sacrifice fulfilled an important function in a society where animal flesh did not form part of the daily nutriment: it made provision for, and at the same time added divine sanction to, the eating of meat. We will come back later to the dining and drinking societies at Palmyra, known especially (but not only) through the more than thousand tesserae found in the different sanctuaries. But first it remains to be emphasized that there is very little evidence for public feasts, for pub-

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e.g. Ingholt (1928), n°12, with pl.IV.2; Drijvers (1976), pl.LXXVII.1; Tanabe (1986), pl.285 and 326; Sadurska and Bounni (1994), cat.19 with fig.83 and cat.200 with fig.84.

[22] See Will (1991). For a discussion of similar structures elsewhere in the region, see Downey (1976).

[23] See Freyberger (1998), Taf.58a-b (ramp and altar), with Will (1997), fig.2-3 (dining hall).

[24] *PAT* 2766, with Kaizer (2002a), p.76, for further references.

lic distribution of meat, in the sense of sacrificial shows attended by all members of the politically (or otherwise) defined community of Palmyrenes.[25] The only unequivocal term at Palmyra found to date which refers to a 'distribution of meat', κρεονομία, is said to have taken place on a particular day (16 *Lôos*, August), for all the *guests* (πάντων τῶν ἐστιωμένων), in front of the statue of the relatively obscure deity Mannos.[26] As regards the large public festivals, it is obvious that none of the dining halls which are excavated so far would have been sufficient, and we may well think, with E. Will, that Palmyrene worshippers were seated under the arcades of the courtyard of the temple of Bel during such days.[27]

But not all sacrifice would result in distribution. In a number of inscriptions, reference is made to what is commonly translated as 'burnt offering', *mqlwt'* in Palmyrenean, ὁλόκαυ<σ>τος in Greek. It has been argued by some that this should not be interpreted in a strict sense, and that part of the meat would always be set aside for the serving priesthood and occasionally for the respective sponsor.[28] However, both the Aramaic (from Akkadian *maqlutu*) and the Greek word (ὅλος + καυσόω, sometimes together with θυσία) imply that the victim was consumed by fire completely, and the terminology chosen seems distinctive enough not to doubt the inherent meaning.[29] According to the author of *De Dea Syria* (54), bulls, cows, goats and sheep were sacrificed (θύουσι) at the temple of Hierapolis, but swine were considered polluted and were therefore neither sacrificed nor eaten (οὔτε θύουσιν οὔτε σιτέονται). This passage seems to distinguish between victims being 'sacrificed' in the sense of being burnt completely, and victims being 'sacrificed' in the sense of ritually slaughtered and rations of their flesh accordingly being shared out. The famous Palmyrene tax law from AD 137 contains an interesting passage, deriving from an edict of a former governor of Syria, Licinius Mucianus, which states how 'the tax on sacrificial animals' should be collected in the *denarius* (referring to the attempt by Ger-

[25] See Kaizer (2002a), p.258, on the very little evidence with regard to the city's possible role in 'public sacrifice'.

[26] For the inscription see Seyrig (1937), p.372, with Kaizer (2002a), p.246-8.

[27] Will (1997), p.878.

[28] Lipiński (1989), p.131.

[29] Kaizer (2002a), p.194-5. Akkadian: Black, George and Postgate (2000), p.196. Greek: Liddell and Scott (1996), p.1217.

manicus in AD 18/19 to standardize taxation according to a central unit), how any tax under a *denarius* should be collected according to custom in the small local coinage, but how 'dead animal bodies that are thrown away' would not be subject to any tax.[30] Is it possible to recognize here a similar differentiation, between on the one hand 'sacrificial animals', whose flesh was going to be distributed for human consumption after the ritual act, and on the other hand the 'dead animal bodies that are thrown away', meaning the remaining carcasses of the victims which underwent a *maqlutu* or ὁλόκαυστος and were not eaten afterwards at a banquet? Or are the 'sacrificial animals' both those which were going to be burnt completely and those which were going to be consumed, and are the 'dead animal bodies that are thrown away' the cadavers of those animals who were bought in order to be sacrificed but died prematurely?

So far, the problem has focused on the distinction between those offerings that were apportioned among the worshippers after the gods had received their share, and those gifts to the gods which were actually offered completely. Another problem is *how did* such offerings actually reach the divine world. As we have seen, some food was, according to the terminology applied in inscriptions, burnt completely. But there is also sufficient evidence to suggest that at Palmyra at least some deities received a specific type of worship in which a κλίνη, a banqueting couch, was covered with cushions and a mattress, and a table was prepared and put in front of it. A certain Mokeimos was honoured in AD 51 because he had given to the temple of Bel not only a golden libation-tray and censer and a golden ladle and four saucers, but also a bed-covering and a pillow for a couch which was situated within that temple.[31] It is known that the small room off the north adyton was almost completely occupied by a stone bench, and it is likely that this room—and also the south adyton after its construction a number of years later—was used for a rite in which the recipient deity would be lying on the mattress, with dishes presented on a table.[32] The different names under which this phenomenon is known from the Classical world indicate its different aspects: in Latin the rite is known as a *lectisternium*, the cover-

[30] *PAT* 0259, with Kaizer (2002a), p.183-5, for discussion and references.
[31] *PAT* 0269, with Kaizer (2002a), p.163-4, for further references.
[32] Pietrzykowski (1990); Kaizer (2002a), p.198-9.

ing of a bed with cushions, while in Greek the name either focuses on that what is placed upon the table, in front of the deity's image, as an offering (τραπεζώματα), or on the fact that the deity is entertained at a meal (θεοξένια).[33] It is worth recalling that in the Classical Greek festivals this form of sacred meal was usually shared by the deity's worshippers. It remains unknown whether humans were present when the gods dined at Palmyra. The rooms in the adyta of the temple of Bel, where the *lectisternia* or *theoxenia* are thought to have taken place, were certainly not large enough to provide place for any substantial number of priests or worshippers. And from the Hellenistic period comes the famous book known under the name of *Bel and the Dragon*, which relates how the prophet Daniel discovers the fraud of the priesthood of Bel at Babylon: Daniel explains to the king how the priests entered the temple via a secret doorway underneath the altar, and together with their wives and children continuously consumed the meat and wine which was placed in front of the idol. No matter how we approach this evocative apocryphal story, it is clear that Bel of Babylon was believed by many to have enjoyed his meals in seclusion. On the other hand, there are Palmyrene tesserae which depict a bed on legs covered by a mattress,[34] and it is not impossible that these items point to a situation in which the worshippers shared in the deity's meal, a situation which was thus the opposite of the more common form of sacrifice with its differentiation between human and divine portions.

This brings us to the ubiquitous 'sacred banquets' at Palmyra, organized by the various religious dining groups and drinking societies in the city.[35] Our main evidence for the banquets are the remains of banqueting halls, and the over thousand tesserae, small tokens with multifarious depictions of gods and goddesses which are generally taken to have functioned as entrance tickets to the occasions.[36] The question remains of who had access to a banquet. The few banqueting halls which are excavated in Palmyra could contain only a very small segment of society. And the tesserae refer to many different groups of worshippers, all identified as 'the sons of X'. How literally do we need to take this kinship terminology? Do the group

[33] See Gill (1974).
[34] Ingholt, Seyrig and Starcky (1955), n^{os}60 + 124.
[35] The evidence is assembled in Kaizer (2002a), p.213-34.
[36] Most recently, see al-As'ad, Briquel-Chatonnet and Yon (2005).

names on the tesserae indeed refer to the children and other descendants of one person who paid for the banquet together?[37] Were 'the sons of X' the guests of benefactor X who bore the expenses of the feast on his own? Or did some of the names of such groups, despite the obvious kinship terminology, denote professional associations instead?[38] Some banquets, such as those organized by the *marzeah* of the priests of Bel, would be open only for a certain class of religious functionaries. We cannot know for sure what happened at the banquets. Incense would be burnt (a small pyre was found in the banqueting room off the agora[39]) and it is impossible to imagine people gathering to eat and drink together without making a libation first. But the information about religious groups and their sacrificial acts which the tesserae provide is not easy to interpret: standard abbreviations and formulae on the minuscule tokens seem to refer to the measuring of certain amounts of sacred wine and meat.[40] Kitchens were part of temple complexes at Palmyra as elsewhere in the ancient world, and the cultic meals which were prepared in there must have resulted from a sacrifice proper. The tesserae show how each cult group assembled under the aegis of a particular divinity. Some tesserae even depict a divine symbol with a couch, and the popular formula *'gn ND*, 'the crater of deity X', seems to evoke a similar notion of divine presence at the banquets.

This brief inventory of the different modes in which worshippers offered to their deities at Palmyra in the Roman period raises numerous issues. The Palmyrenean terminology for sacrificial acts and other ritual practices has obvious parallels in other Aramaic dialects and Semitic languages,[41] but even before the Greek koinè came to provide "a common link for the cults of the great pagan centres"[42] in the Near East, there was substantial correspondence between the sacrificial system at Palmyra and the methods of religious observance known from the Graeco-Roman world. The distinction between the burning of incense and the libation (the basic forms of expressing a

[37] Thus Dijkstra (1995), p.90.
[38] See Kaizer (2002b).
[39] Seyrig (1940), p.243.
[40] Kaizer (2002a), p.188-91, and Lipiński (1992).
[41] The material from the Nabataean world is now discussed by Healey (2001), p.155-80.
[42] Thus Bowersock (1990), p.16.

sense of subordination to the divine world), various types of sacrifice proper (each variety being an important part of the worshipper's policy on negotiating with the divine world), *lectisternia* and θεοξένια (hosting the deity in an appropriate procedure) and banqueting (whose religious dimensions seemed often revealed by the assumption of divine presence), all of which lay at the heart of worship at Palmyra, is a characteristic of the religious life of the Classical world at large. And this distinction, as is well known, cannot be related solely, if at all, to different deities receiving different cults.

In a recent article on sacred and profane elements in Graeco-Roman religion, P. Veyne has illustrated how the variety of ways in which humans could give ritual expression to their bonds with the gods mirrors the variety of ways in which they dealt with each other.[43] The analogy can be drawn for Palmyra as well. Without willing to underestimate the intense feelings and religious zeal that the worshippers could experience, all forms of sacrifice formed part of the phenomena discussed by W. Burkert under the heading of 'votive religion'. Naturally, there are important elements such as 'feeding the gods', the sacrifice as an anthropomorphic conception of nourishing the divine world,[44] and the securing of the society's durability through the regular performance of sacred rites, but sacrifice also shared with other aspects of 'votive religion' its "experimental character: one may well try several possibilities to find the really effective expedient."[45] With his sacrifice, man proposed to his god a fair exchange: *do ut des*, often altering its course to *da ut dem*.[46] Unlike burnt offerings (if indeed burnt completely), other sacrificial acts resulted in the gift of the less edible parts of the victim to the deity, before the good parts of the meat would be distributed amongst the participants of the subsequent 'sacred dinner'. It will be a vain effort indeed to look for decisive moments where sacred sacrifice ends and where profane nurture begins. From that point of view the rites referred to as *lectisternia* or θεοξένια, when the recipient deity was

[43] Veyne (2000), p.16: "Les hommes ont toujours imaginé leurs relations avec leurs dieux sur l'analogie d'une des nombreuses relations qu'ils pouvaient avoir entre eux." The part which follows owes nearly all to Veyne's important paper.

[44] This is especially clear in the ancient Sumerian and Babylonian texts, on which see Lambert (1993), esp. p.198.

[45] Burkert (1987), p.12ff, at p.14.

[46] Cf. Veyne (2000), p.21; Burkert (1987), p.13.

supposed to dine in private, seem much more straightforward. Man would serve his god in a manner similar to the way in which he would traditionally receive a ξένος.[47] Both such rites and the occasions where man and god dined together show how familiar the worshippers were with their deities. As Veyne stated, "inviter un dieu serait chose inimaginable dans les religions monotheistes actuelles."[48] But the borderline between sacred and profane is most unclear at the banquet following the sacrifice. Here, man would eat that part of the meat which was good to eat and which was not offered to his god. Ancient and modern authors alike have the tendency to exaggerate man's indulgence at gatherings where he ate meat and drank wine. As we have seen, the tesserae usually combine the name of a cult group with a particular deity, and it is of course debatable how to approach the symbolic language and imagery applied.[49] However, there is an important notional difference between the sacrificial act where the deity is present in a symbolic way, and the occasion to which he can be (but not always is!) invited afterwards.[50] The respective deity who is invited to dine with his worshippers, after having received his own part at the sacrifice, supplies, in a certain way, an even higher degree of sacred articulation of the solidarity amongst the human participants in the banquet.

Sacrifice in the Classical world has been described, by J.-P. Vernant, as bringing man and god together while simultaneously separating them.[51] Also at Roman Palmyra, the different modes in which the relationship between worshipper and deity was ritually expressed reflect the complex system of reciprocal relations between the human and the divine sphere, in which material and immaterial

[47] Cf. Veyne (2000), p.20, explaining why "l'invité céleste" would eat on his own: "les invitations publiques décalquent les usages diplomatiques."

[48] Veyne (2000), p.14, adding that "cette familiarité a des limites."

[49] The terminology with which we are faced can be explained in many ways. The above-mentioned κρεονομία [Seyrig (1937), p.372] is said to have taken place ἔμπροσθεν Μαννου θεοῦ, from which Veyne (2000), p.13, concludes that "les bénéficiaires mangeront devant le lectisterne de ce dieu …, mais non en sa compagnie."

[50] With Veyne (2000), p.6: "cette pratique de piété était fréquente, mais non obligatoire: offrir au dieux, outre les parties de la victime qui lui étaient dues et qu'il a déjà recues, une part de la bonne nourriture que savouraient les participants au banquet sacrificiel."

[51] Vernant, in the discussion following his paper (1981), p.33. Quoted by Veyne (2000), p.6.

matters were traded. Not just the cultural background and 'origin' of the rituals involved is what matters, but more so their place and functioning in the society from which our evidence comes. An appreciation of the conformity, at least partial, of the Palmyrene evidence for sacrificial acts to general patterns of religious culture as are known from the Graeco-Roman world, could then lead to a reappraisal of the 'nature' of these and other aspects of religious life at Palmyra in the Roman period.

TRADITION AND CHANGE IN THE BELIEFS AT ASSUR, NINEVEH AND NISIBIS BETWEEN 300 BC AND AD 300

PETER W. HAIDER

The objective of this study is to demonstrate the variety of local religious life in North-Mesopotamia during the Hellenistic and Parthian or Roman times. As examples of the interplay between 'local' and 'introduced' religious aspects, I choose three towns in that region, Assur, Nineveh and Nisibis, which had all played a distinctive role in the Assyrian period. Despite the fact that they were located relatively close to each other, the development of their religious culture in the Hellenistic and Roman periods went in different directions.

Assur

We start with Assur, the old Assyrian metropolis, where we find not only many inscriptions, but also some ruins of the sanctuaries of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. After the fall and the destruction of the city in 612 BC, the Babylonians rebuilt parts of the town on a much smaller scale. Within the old residential and cultic centre, only two small structures which followed a Babylonian plan were constructed within the southern forecourt of the old sanctuary of Assur.[1] After the Parthian conquest of Mesopotamia, Assur came to life again. According to W. Andrae, it was possible to distinguish three phases of building activity in the city. The first phase, the most prosperous one, might have been ended by an attack by Trajan in AD

[1] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.2-3 and p.71-2, pl.2; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81; Andrae (1977), p.237-40 and p.251-2, fig.216-7. A decline of the city took place during the Achaemenid and Hellenistic periods, see Oates (1968), p.61-2. Barnett (1963), p.25, thought that the city of *Kainai*, mentioned by Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.4.28) ought to be identified with Tigrit and not with Assur, as Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.2, and Andrae (1938), p.248, tried to prove.

116, and the second, poorer phase by the destruction of the city by Septimius Severus in AD 198.[2]

The most important religious buildings of Parthian Assur are grouped at the highest point of the town, between the ruins of the old Enlil-Assur ziggurat and the Tigris. These buildings and their inscriptions provide evidence for both change and continuity. The new sanctuaries of Parthian type were dedicated to both old and new gods, and were built over the ruins of the old temple of Assur. Even the festival house of Assyrian times, to the north of the town, was rebuilt during the Parthian period, exactly following its old plan. None of the other buildings which certainly were temples were reconstructed, and Parthian houses and kilns were erected there into a layer of debris. Andrae suggested that the principal ziggurat functioned as a citadel, perhaps with the residence of the satrap on its summit, though now totally vanished.[3] However, it seems not only more natural that the ziggurat retained its religious function, as did the ziggurats of Anu and Eanna in Uruk, the ziggurat of Nabu in Borsippa and the ziggurat of Enlil in Nippur[4], but there is actual positive evidence of cultic life in a temple on top of the ziggurat in Assur.[5]

Temple N and temple A

The Babylonian conquerors had built two small and simple temples at the southwest corner of the forecourt of the sanctuary of the god Assur.[6] The simplest one is the so-called 'temple N'. It consisted only of one broad room, with a cult niche in the rear wall and a base for the cult statue in front of it.[7] This building does not seem to have

[2] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.2-3, p.58 and p.60. The discussion of the stratification by Schlumberger (1970), p.113-5, is not founded on good evidence.

[3] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.6-7; Andrae (1938), p.250 and p.255-6, fig.227.

[4] On Uruk, see Downey (1988), p.15-20 and p.33-5; on Borsippa, see ibid., p.15. For the latest findings about the ziggurat of Nabu at Borsippa, after twenty years of research, see Allinger-Csollich (1991), p.383-499; id. (1996), p.19-59 and p.216-20; id. (1998), p.95-330; Fick (2001), p.73-6, fig.7 (burial of two high dignitaries with priestly function).

[5] See below, with n.46-7.

[6] Andrae (1904), p.38-52, fig.4-7; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81, pl.4-5; Andrae (1938), p.218, fig.216; Downey (1988), p.149-50, fig.66.

[7] Andrae (1904), p.38 and p.43-4, fig.4,7; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81; Andrae (1938), p.238-9, fig.216.

survived into the Parthian period.[8] We know nothing about the god or goddess who was worshipped in this temple. The second neo-Babylonian temple, the so-called 'temple A', consisted of an antecella and a cella, in the shape of broad rooms of the same width.[9] The outer and the inner doors were set in each case within a stepped niche. In the rear wall of the cella was a shallow niche, and a base for a cult statue in front of it.[10] A small brick altar stood outside in the forecourt, on the axis of the temple entrance.[11] Because the figure of Heracles was the main inhabitant of this sanctuary in the Parthian period, it is likely that a male divinity, possibly Nergal, was worshipped here already in the neo-Babylonian period.[12]

The new Parthian building of temple A followed the same plan and used the standing walls of its predecessor as foundations.[13] The remains of the architectural decoration of this sanctuary reveal not only Ionicizing capitals of half-columns and of pilasters, but also ornamental stuccoes of Parthian character.[14] Therefore, temple A represented a Babylonian sacred building with decorative elements derived from the Graeco-Roman and Parthian worlds. In its cult room stood a stele with a fairly high relief, showing the figure of a naked Heracles standing frontally, resting his right hand on a club, and with a lion's skin over his left arm.[15] T. Kaizer has analysed

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[8] Id. (1904), p.47; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81, pl.4-5; Andrae (1977), p.238-9.

[9] Id. (1904), p.38-43, fig.3,4,6; id. and Lenzen (1933), p.71, pl.24; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81, pl.4.5; Andrae (1938), p.258, fig.216-7; Heinrich (1982), p.217-8; Downey (1988), p.149, fig.66.

[10] Andrae (1904), p.39, fig.4; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81, fig.4, pl.4,5; Andrae (1938), p.238, fig.216-7; Heinrich (1982), p.318; Downey (1988), p.149-50, fig.66.

[11] Andrae (1904), p.39, fig.3.4; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81, pl.4.5; Andrae (1938), p.238, fig.216-7.

[12] See the discussion below. Andrae (1938), p.238, suggested that the god Assur was worshipped there until the new temple was built over the ruins of the old Assur Temple of Assyrian times.

[13] Andrae (1904), p.45 and p.47; id. and Lenzen (1933), p.58, p.60 and p.71-2, pl.24a.c,30b; Andrae (1938), p.252; Downey (1988), p.150, fig.67.

[14] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.72, pl.34.

[15] Andrae (1904), p.49; Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.72, pl.24,59e (Ass. 801); Haller and Andrae (1955), p.81; Andrae (1938), p.252, fig.229; Mathiesen (1992), p.193-4 (nº165), fig.46. Downey (1969), p.11 and p.95, dated the relief to the first century AD, while Mathiesen (1989), p.124, and id. (1992), p.57 and p.194, assigned it, according to its iconography and style, to the beginning of the third century AD. Fragments of a nearly life-size male statue were also found there, donated by a cer-

the figure of Heracles in Palmyra and in Hatra.[16] He pointed out that Heracles was identified in these towns with 'Gad', the 'good fortune'.[17] This Heracles-Gad appeared not only as a protecting deity of the northern Gate of Hatra, of the town Palmyra and of Dura Europos, but also in the same function of a family or tribe, and as *genius cohortis*.[18]

But Heracles was definitely identified with Nergal as well. This is proven by an inscribed altar for this syncretistic deity, and also by the name of a sacred place 'of Nergal' being called *Herakleous bōmoi* and *Ad Herculem*.[19] And the inscriptions of Assur do not mention Gad, but Nergal by name.[20] It can therefore be assumed that temple A was dedicated to Heracles-Nergal.[21] The reason why Heracles was identified with Nergal becomes understandable if we look at the Hellenistic idea of this 'son of Zeus'. This concept accentuated his character of a deliverer of mankind from pain and trouble. He was called *sôter* ('saviour'), the 'important sufferer' and the 'conqueror of the death'.[22] Similar functions were ascribed to Nergal: the 'power of Marduk', the 'lord of peace' and the 'lord of the under-

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tain Nabudajan between AD 129 and 188. Cf. Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.106-7, pl.58e (Ass. 750, 758, 764, 974, 976); Mathiesen (1992), p.193, fig.44 (nº161). For the inscription and the reading of the date, see Aggoula (1985), p.25 nº1; Mathiesen (1992), p.27 and p.193, nº161, fig.44a-b. Mathiesen dated the sculpture to AD 137/8 or 147/8; Beyer (1998), p.11, A1, gave the chronological frame of dating, i.e. February—March, AD 129-188.

[16] Kaizer (1997) for Palmyrene gad-inscriptions; id. (1998), p.33-43 and p.57-58, for Hatrene gad-inscriptions; ibid., p.43-46, p.50, p.54-56 and p.60 for other gad-inscriptions; ibid., p.46-62 for analysis and conclusions; id. (2000) for an extensive discussion about the question if Heracles was identified with the god Nergal.

[17] Id. (1997), p. 147-148; id. (1998), p. 46-62; id. (2000), p.230-1.

[18] Id. (1997); id. (1998); Dirven (1999), 99-127; Kaizer (2000a), p. 230-1.

[19] The altar was published by Gawlikowski (2000). For the inscription mentioning the sacred place 'of Nergal' (near Saʿadīya, 25 km east of Hatra), see Aggoula (1985), nºA.5; Beyer (1998), p.116, S1. The same place is named by Ptolemy (*Geogr.* 5.18.1 and 6.3.4) and appears on the *Tabula Peutingeriana* X.4. See also Kaizer (2000a), p.231. For arguments for an identification of Heracles with Nergal in the older publications, see the references in ibid., p.219-31. For the recent version, see Dirven (1999), p.147-55.

[20] Beyer (1998), p.12-3, A10, A14.4.

[21] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.72, pl.59e, identified this figure with Heracles-Melqart, but Aggoula (1985), p.9, interpreted it, more probable, as Heracles-Nergal.

[22] Carcopino (1941), p.173-7; Brommer (1953), p.66; Nilsson (1967), p.186, p.453-4, p.677 and p.816; Nilsson (1974), p.544; Ritter (1995), p.53-5, p.99-100, p.104-20, p.170 and p.220-30.

world'.[23] Steles showing images of dignitaries were found in front of and within the south gate (nº1) of the temple enclosure, built in the Parthian period before AD 12/13, when the oldest stele was erected there.[24]

The temple of the god Assur and his consort Serū, and the festival house (Bit Akitu)

In the Parthian period, a group of iwans set back from a walled courtyard was constructed over the ruins of the old temple of Assur. Two phases are discernible. In the first one, there were two adjoining iwans, founded in the first century BC.[25] The northeastern one was raised considerably above the level of the courtyard, and approached by a flight of steps. After the destruction of AD 116 and in the second phase, a third iwan was added to the northeast.[26] In this room benches along the walls were used by the worshippers, who scratched their own names and the names of the adored deities in the plaster of the floor and of the benches. Assur and Serū are mentioned far more often than others like Nannai and Nabu.[27] Most of the personal names were derived from names of Babylonian and Assyrian divinities.[28] Some of the Aramaic inscriptions bear dates ranging between 511 and 539 of the Seleucid era, i.e. between AD 199/200 and 227/8.[29] But that is not all: The fact that the month of Nisan, the first month of the year, is named most often in the inscriptions from the Parthian temple of Assur, provides evidence for the celebration of the New Year's festival in the Parthian period, as

[23] Von Weiher (1971), p.4, p.14-5, p.68-70 and p.73; Lambert (1973), p.355-63; id. (1990), p.40-52; Livingstone (1995), p.1171.

[24] Steles Ass. 1071-2,1759,18716: Andrae (1904), p.49-52, fig.8; id. and Lenzen (1933), p.105-7, pl.58f-g,59a-c; Andrae (1938), p.254, fig.230-2; Mathiesen (1992), p.23, p.27 and p.190-1 nº158-60. The reading of the dating (2[+x]24) on stele nº1072 as 224 (89/8 BC), 324 (AD 12/3) or 424 (AD 112/3) is a problem. See Aggoula (1985), p.26-8 nº4; Mathiesen (1992), p.191 nº159; Beyer (1998), p.11, A4. However, iconographic and stylistic analysis allowed Mathiesen (1992), p.23-33, to date this stele conclusively not later than to the beginning of the first century AD.

[25] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.73-88, fig.41-2, pl.28-29a; Andrae (1938), p.250-2, fig.228; Downey (1988), p.156, fig.65,72.

[26] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.73-86, pl.29b,37-9, fig.41-2; Andrae (1938), p.250-1, fig.228; Downey (1988), p.156, fig.73.

[27] Andrae and Jensen (1920), p.8-9 and p.11-34, esp. p.29-34, nº16-34,36; Beyer (1998), p.12-25, A11a, A12, A14-5, A17-8, A20-9, A32-4.

[28] Andrae and Jensen (1920), p 34-42; Beyer (1998), p.12-25.

[29] Andrae and Jensen (1920), p.14,22-3; Beyer (1998), p.12 (A6b), p.15 (A17a. b), p.16-24 (A20, A23a.c, A25b-g, A26a.b, A27a-k, A28a-i, A29a-i).

P. Jensen rightly suggested and S.B. Downey accepted.[30] It is, then, not astonishing that the *bīt akitu*, the great festival house, was rebuilt in essentially its Assyrian form with the addition of a few architectural details from the Graeco-Roman world during the Parthian period too.[31]

The peripteros

The next temple of the Parthian period, the so-called *peripteros*, lies together with the 'Freitreppenbau' and the ziggurat in their own temenos.[32] The *peripteros* is a rectangular building, divided longitudinally into three rooms, and surrounded on three sides by a colonnade.[33] Columns with capitals of Ionicizing type were architectural elements of this building[34], and five altars found in the ruins ensure its identification as a temple.[35] However, inscriptions have not come to light here. The plan of this temple shows an antecella and cella of a Babylonian 'Breitraum' type, preceded by an iwan-like room of Parthian architecture, and surrounded only on three sides by a colonnade of Greek character.[36] Therefore, the *peripteros* represents a combination of Babylonian, Parthian and Greek architectural forms. It is visible proof of the interplay between, and mixture of, different cultural and specifically religious elements in Assur during the Parthian era.

The 'Freitreppenbau'

The so-called 'Freitreppenbau' was built just in front of the eastern side of the old Enlil-Assur ziggurat, although on a slightly different

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[30] Andrae and Jensen (1920), p.43-5. The doubts of Heinrich (1982), p.276, about the functioning of the building as a festival hall during the Parthian period, are therefore unnecessary. Cf. Downey (1988), p.158-9.

[31] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.89-90, fig.43, pl.42; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.79-80, pl.69a; Andrae (1938), p.219-24, p.249, p.254, fig.199-200; Downey (1988), p.156 and p.158, fig.74.

[32] Andrae (1904), p.39; Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.58-67, fig.34,36-7, pl.2,25-6; Andrae (1938), p.254-8, fig.234-5,237; Downey (1988), p.151-2, fig.65,68-9.

[33] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.64-6, fig.36-7, pl.26,33-3; Andrae (1938), p.258, fig.234,237; Downey (1988), p.151-2, fig.68.

[34] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.64, fig.36-7, pl.34; Lenzen (1955), p.126; Andrae (1938), p.258, fig.237; Downey (1988), p.151, fig.69.

[35] Andrae (1904), p.63; id. and Lenzen (1933), p.70-1, pl.36; Andrae (1938), p.257-9, fig.234,238.

[36] Id. and Lenzen (1933), p.67, fig.37, pl.26; Downey (1988), fig.68-9.

orientation.[37] This building consisted of three adjoining iwans. However, there was no direct access to the central elevated iwan, which was approached by eight steps, from the side ones, as they lay on a deeper level.[38] From the upper part of the façade of this building come fragments of the architectural decoration. They include engaged columns and an architrave with a series of engaged pilasters alternating with engaged columns, and a frieze showing vine-branches with grapes.[39] The central iwan has benches running along the walls of the three sides of the room, as in the temple of Assur.[40] These benches were probably also used by an assembly of worshippers. Three limestone altars were found on the stairs leading to the central iwan.[41] Therefore, this building was a temple, and not a tribunal or a *bouleuterion*, as the excavators W. Andrae and A. Haller thought.[42] It is also unlikely that the sanctuary should be identified as a fire-temple, as R. Ghirsman believed.[43] S.B. Downey rightly suggested that the 'Freitreppenbau' might be a temple connected with the ziggurat, because the ziggurats of Anu and of Inanna at Uruk were also rebuilt to function as part of a sanctuary.[44] And the same happened at the ziggurats at Borsippa and Nippur.[45] So the form, the equipment and the situation in front of the ziggurat at Assur point to a function of the 'Freitreppenbau' as a 'low temple' and part of a sanctuary which included the ziggurat with a 'high temple'. Indeed, an Aramaic inscription on the lid of a thymiaterion from Assur shows that 'the temple on the cult height of the god

[37] Andrae (1904), p.60-2, fig.6.8-9,14; id. and Lenzen (1933), p.67-70, fig.37, pl.2,27a,35; Andrae (1938), p.258, fig.234,236; Downey (1988), p.152-6, fig.65,69-70.

[38] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.67, fig.37, pl.27a,35; Andrae (1938), p.258, fig.234,236; Downey (1988), p.152-6, fig.69-70.

[39] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.68-70, fig.38-40, pl.27b,34; Andrae (1938), p.258; Downey (1988), p.153, fig.71.

[40] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.68,70, pl.27a,35b-c; Haller and Andrae (1955), pl.21.6; Andrae (1938), p.258; Downey (1988), p.152, fig.70.

[41] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.70, pl.27a,35a,36; Andrae (1977), fig.236.

[42] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.67; Haller and Andrae (1955), p.4, pl.21.6; Andrae (1938), p.254-8.

[43] Ghirshman (1976), p.217-8. His correction of the orientation of the rooms in Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.67 and pl.24c is nonsense.

[44] Downey (1988), p.155-6.

[45] See above, n.4.

Bel'[46] existed and was still in use in AD 184/5.[47] Moreover, Bel is mentioned alongside Assur in other inscriptions in this town.[48]

Consequently we have to take note of a revival in the Parthian period not only of the cult of the god Assur and his consort Sarū in a rebuilding of the Assur temple and the festival house, but also of the cult of Bel in his 'temple on the cult height', on top of the ziggurat, and in his 'low temple', the 'Freitreppenbau' in front of it. Moreover, the worship of Heracles-Nergal existed probably in temple A during the same era, and perhaps a cult of the god Nergal in this sanctuary in Babylonian times already. It can be assumed that one or both of the often mentioned deities, Nabu and Nannai, had their sanctuary in the so-called *peripteros*. Most probably, it was Nannai, the 'daughter of Bel, the lord of the gods'[49], who resided here, near her father's temple and within his own temenos. The religious architecture of Parthian Assur connected traditional Babylonian and Assyrian elements, like broad-rooms and ziggurat, with Parthian iwans. The mixed form of this architecture was combined with supporting elements like columns and pilasters and with patterns of decoration all drawn from the Graeco-Roman world. However, as far as we know the Heracles-Nergal figure is the only example of a syncretistic deity in the pantheon of Assur during the Parthian era. All the other gods and goddesses appear in Parthian shape.

Thus on a large *pithos* we find scratched drawings only in Parthian style, completed by Aramaic inscriptions.[50] They are the work of an ''Eni'al'assor […] of the god',[51] and his illustration is said to have been an 'image of the Son of our Lords, of the god of (the town?) …. (?), who should like to save Baziya for ever'.[52] To the left of this picture a Parthian man is sacrificing on a thymiaterion before a god upon a throne wearing a robe, which is decorated with moon crescents and stars. On his head this deity wears a big rosette like a

[46] Andrae (1977), fig.240; Beyer (1998), p.12, A7.
[47] However, the dating [4]96 (AD 184/5) could also be read as [3]96 (AD 84/5).
[48] Andrae and Jensen (1920), p.9, p.21 n^{os}30,39, and p.31 n^{o}39.
[49] See below, with n.57.
[50] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), p.109-11, fig.46 (Ass. 15843); Andrae (1938), p.259-60, fig.239.
[51] Beyer (1998), p.14, A15f.
[52] Ibid., p.14, A15d.

crown, perhaps a symbol of the sun.[53] This god of heaven is to be identified with 'Bel the lord of the gods'.[54] The inscription accompanying the sacrificing man reads 'image of Arduq, son of 'Enay, son of R'utassor, son of 'Benna, of the caretaker (of the temple) of Nannai, the king(!), of the superior of Bar'elaha [of…] of the temple.'[55] A smaller person, standing beside a thymiaterion and carrying palm branches, is characterized as the 'image of the treasurer Yhabbarmaren, son of Baziya'.[56] The second deity is the goddess Nannai, lying on a couch: 'image of Nannai, the king (!), our mistress, daughter of Bel, the lord of gods'.[57] Beside the goddess the '[image] of Baziya(?)'[58] is shown, a Parthian man standing between two vertical plants, who is also sacrificing on a thymiaterion. It is interesting that all inscriptions in Assur are written in Aramaic. No Greek texts have been found in the city. We can therefore assume that the upper class in Assur spoke Aramaic and had adopted the Parthian culture in a high degree.

Nineveh

In 1998, J. Reade published a study on the town of Nineveh in the Hellenistic and Parthian periods.[59] It is now necessary to supplement that paper. During the Seleucid period, 'Ezida', the temple of Nabu on the Kuyundjik hill (the acropolis of Ninos/Nineveh), was restored.[60] In 32/1 BC a certain Apollophanes placed a Greek inscription on a column of this temple.[61] He dedicated it in honour of the *theoi epèkooi* on behalf of Apollonios, the *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis*.[62]

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[53] Andrae and Lenzen (1933), fig.46; Andrae (1938), fig.239.
[54] Beyer (1998), p.14, A15b.
[55] Ibid., p.14, A15a.
[56] Ibid., p.14, A15c.
[57] Ibid., p.14, A15b.
[58] Ibid., p.14, A15e.
[59] Reade (1998), p.65-83; for a very short version, see id. (1998-2001), p.428-9.
[60] Thompson and Hutchinson (1929), p.106-7 and p.140-2; Thompson and Mallowan (1933), p.111; Weidner (1936), p.641-2; Oates (1968), p.61; Downey (1988), p.49; Dalley (1993), p.137-8; Reade (1998), p.67-8, fig.2; Russell (1997), p.122; Reade (1998-2001), p.428-9.
[61] This inscription replaced an earlier, almost totally illegible one. Thompson and Hutchinson (1929), p.140-2; Reade (1998), p.69, fig.3.
[62] Thompson and Hutchinson (1929), p.140-2; *SEG* 7 (1937), p.11 nº 37; Le Rider (1967), p.15; Reade (1998), p.69, fig.3.

In the Hellenistic period, Apollo, as a son of Zeus and the leader of the Muses, was thought to be a provider of inspiration and wisdom to those searching for it, while bringing death and ruin to evildoers.[63] It was, therefore, logical to identify Apollo with Nabu, the 'son of Marduk' and 'Lord of wisdom',[64] and it was above all natural to identify Marduk (Bel) with Zeus, who could take the shape of Zeus-Belus. Last but not least, Apollo belonged to the *theoi epèkooi*. Therefore, during the late first century BC, the upper class in the *polis* with its Greek civic organization was supporting Hellenistic culture and especially religious beliefs.

Some personal names show that not only Apollo was worshipped at Ninos/Nineveh, a town that was raised to the rank of *Colonia Augusta Felix Niniva Claudia* by the Roman emperor Claudius.[65] The throne room of the southwest palace, built by Sennacherib upon the Kuyundjik hill, was transformed by the Parthians or Romans into a sanctuary.[66] The main entrance received a new lintel, decorated with winged lion griffins flanking a large crater.[67] Inside the room, a votive offering of high quality was found among other votives. It is an inscribed second-century sculpture showing a 'Herakles Epitrapezios', taking a rest from his toils.[68] This work of art was created in the second century by a sculptor named Diogenes, whose model was a work of the same theme created by the famous Lysippus. The founder of the sculpture was called Sarapiodoros, son of Artemidoros. He had erected this statue of 'Herakles Epitrapezios' on account of a vow.[69]

Within the sanctuary, fragments of other sculptures of Heracles were found. One piece shows this hero, named the 'bringer of luck', standing alongside a goddess, perhaps the Tyche of the town, and a

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[63] Nilsson (1967), p.542-4; Miller (1986); Birge (1995), p.13-9; Bierl (1995), p.81-96; Miller (1995), p.99-112.

[64] Pomponio (1978); Mayer (1993), p.177-80; Millard (1995), p.1143-5.

[65] For the legends on the coins struck at Nineveh, see Layard (1853), p.590-2, with figures; Reade (1998), p.68.

[66] Madhloom (1967), p.78-9, pl.IX; id. (1968), p.50, pl.7a,14a.b; Reade (1998), p.67; Dalley (1993), p.138; Russell (1998), fig.5.

[67] Smith (1875), fig. opposite p.308; Dalley (1993), p.138, fig.2; Reade (1998), p.76, fig.13.

[68] Dalley (1993), p.138, fig.1; Reade (1998), p.69-70, fig.4. For its dating in the second century AD, see Invernizzi (1989), p.623-36, fig. on p.635-6. Cf. Bartman (1992), p.181, who opted for the first century AD.

[69] Invernizzi (1989), p.624-8, fig. on p.636 (inscriptions).

third figure, representing another, unfortunately damaged and unnamed male deity.[70] The fact that Heracles is named the 'bringer of luck' corresponds perfectly to the Parthian god Gad, as we know from Hatra and Palmyra, where Gad is sometimes identified with Heracles.[71] If we look at the founder of this 'Herakles Epitrapezios', it can be noticed that his name, Sarapiodoros, meaning 'gift of the god Sarapis', may be an indication of the worship of this Egyptian god of the universe by the parents of Sarapiodoros. Thus it is very interesting that a golden amulet of the second or early third century was found (by illegal digging, probably in a tomb) at Nineveh.[72] It shows Sarapis laying on a couch, on the left side of the creator-god 'Isis lactans', and on his right side the goddess 'Isis Thermouthis', in the shape of the Uraeus snake. Both facts, the (in Assyria) unusual theophoric personal name of the dedicant, and the amulet, are likely to point to worshippers of these Egyptian gods amongst the upper class of Ninos, the *Colonia Niniva Claudia*, during the second and in the early third century.

However, not only Apollo-Nabu, 'Herakles Epitrapezios', Heracles-Gad, Tyche, Sarapis and Isis were worshipped at Ninos during the Parthian and Roman period, but also the Greek god Hermes: in the second half of the third century, a cult statue of this divine messenger and 'psychopompos' stood on the raised platform of a small sanctuary of the simplest Babylonian-Assyrian 'Breitraum' type, discovered in the residential area.[73] This Hermes figure is wearing a short cloak and has wings at his feet and on his head, which is decorated with a diadem. His gesture to hide his hands behind his cloak was a common religious custom of the Parthian natives.[74] Since we have no document which shows the identification of Hermes with an indigenous god in northern Mesopotamia, one may suppose that

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[70] Reade (1998), p.70-1, fig.5-6.

[71] See above, with n.16-9.

[72] Kraus (1963), p.101-2, pl.XVIIIa; Müller (1963), p.31-2, fig.27; Kraus (1979), p.571-2, fig.3; Invernizzi (1989), p.629-30, fig. on p.636; Le Rider (1967), p.11; Reade (1998), p.70.

[73] Mustapha (1954), p.280-3, pl.1-3; Oates (1968), p.61; Scott and MacGinnis (1990), p.69-71; Reade (1998), p.68; id. (1998-2001), p.429. For the dating of this statue (n°152) in the time between AD 150 and 190, see the analysis by Mathiesen (1992), p.35, p.51 and p.187-8, fig.38. For Hermes and his functions, see Nilsson (1967), p.505-10; id. (1974), p.355.

[74] Colledge (1976), pl.20,26; Drijvers (1976), pl.V,XI.

some representatives of the people in Ninos received this Greek god and the beliefs connected with him, while consigning their own rituals to Hermes.

It is noticeable that, in contrast to Assur, nearly all texts which were found thus far from Hellenistic, Parthian and Roman Nineveh[75], were written in Greek.[76] The town is named a *polis* and had with a *strategos* and an *epistates* a Greek civic organization. The upper class of the indigenous but Hellenized population worshipped Hellenistic deities in syncretistic form, with Babylonian-Assyrian gods like Apollo-Nabu and Heracles-Gad, in sanctuaries on the acropolis of the town. In addition, the inhabitants of Ninos-Nineveh prayed to non-fused Hellenistic gods, like 'Herakles Epitrapezios', Hermes, Sarapis, Isis and perhaps Tyche.

Nisibis

The ancient town of Nisibis, the modern village Nusaibīn, at the feet of the mountains of Mt Izala (Tur-'Abdīn), on the banks of the river Djagdjag (the ancient Mygdonios), had been residence of an Assyrian governor and was plundered by the Babylonians in 612 BC.[77] We then hear nothing about this city until the beginning of the Hellenistic period. Seleucus I set up a Macedonian *katoikie* at this place, but Antiochus IV founded a new town, named 'Antiocheia Mygdonia'.[78] From 129 BC onwards, this town belonged to the Parthians,

[75] The foundation of the Greek polis of Nineveh took place most likely under Seleucus I, when he established Macedonian and Greek colonies at important strategic points, see Jones (1971), p.216-7; Reade (1998), p.68. Pottery, figurines and other small objects found in and around the temple of Nabu go back to the third or second century BC, see ibid., p.76, with further references. For Roman coins, pottery and small objects, especially *militaria*, dating from the first and third centuries AD, see Eiland (1998), p.59-67; Reade (1998), p.78, fig.19.

[76] Two profane inscriptions in Pahlavi were found on Kuyundjik hill, dating from the period between the second century BC and the first century AD. See Thompson and Hutchinson (1929), pl.57 nº343; Smith (1875), p.427; Reade (1998), p.76-7, fig.15-7. Fragments of two or three clay tablets in unidentified script were found in the southwest Palace, see Smith (1875), p.426-7; Reade (1998), p.79-80, fig.20.

[77] For the Assyrian and neo-Babylonian sources, see Sturm (1936), p.723-7; Zawadzki (1988), p.105; Streck (1998-2001), p.186.

[78] *CIG* nº6856.5. For the coins, see Head (1911), p.815; *BMC Arabia*, p.CVIII, 119. Cf. Polyb. 5.51.1; Julianus *Or.* II 62B.79. Cf. Tscherikower (1927), p.98-9,

though for a short time (80-65 BC) interrupted by an Armenian occupation (Cass. Dio 36.6.2).[79] Conquered by the Roman emperor Trajan in AD 114, and again by Lucius Verus in 164 (Cass. Dio 67.23.2 and 68.30.2),[80] Nisibis remained under Roman government until AD 260, and again from 298 to 363 (Amm. Marc. 25.7.9).[81] In AD 195, Septimius Severus made Nisibis capital of the newly founded province Mesopotamia. It obtained the status of a Roman colony, with the name *Septimia Colonia Metropolis* (Cass. Dio 75.2.3, 75.3.2 and 75.6.2).[82]

Our only sources for religious life in Nisibis are coins and a few mentions of divine names in historical texts and in the Christian legend of king Abgar of Edessa. From these, we are able to distinguish between two groups of deities worshipped by the native inhabitants of Nisibis. On the one hand, we find Babylonian and Assyrian divinities like Nabu, Bel and Nikkal (the old Hurrian goddess and identical with Ningal, the wife of the moon god).[83] The second group is formed by Syro-Phoenician deities. Atargatis, obviously identical with the Dea Syria, is mentioned, and the 'stone of El', an example of the worship of a so-called *baitylos*.[84] Moreover, we find a typically Hellenistic concept in Nisibis too. The goddess Tyche, daughter of Zeus, is documented here as the Hellenistic personification of fate and good luck of the town. The reverses of the coins show Tyche with her mural crown, connected with the constellation of Aries, and with the local river god Mygdonios at her feet.[85] The meaning of the sign of the zodiac remains concealed for us. Sometimes the statue of Tyche is represented in her temple, the 'Tychaion' of Nisibis.[86]

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p.143-4, p.168 and p.177; Sturm (1936), p.727; Jones (1971), p.216-7; Isaac (1992), p.11 and p.23.

[79] Cf. Astourian (1911), p.22-3; Sturm (1936), p.730-1.

[80] Cf. ibid., p. 734-5.

[81] Cf. ibid., p. 735-40; Isaac (1992), p.33 and p.399.

[82] For the coin legends, see Head (1911), p.815; *BMC Arabia*, p.CVIII-CIX, 119-24. Cf. Hasebroek (1921), p.75-6, p.78-9 and p.110-1; Sturm (1936), p.337; Jones (1971), p.221-2; Isaac (1992), p.252 and p.360.

[83] For the list of gods named in the legend of Abgar, see Moses Choren. 2.27. Cf. Sturm (1936), p.740-1, who did not believe that the named deities were really worshiped in Nisibis, but without reason.

[84] Moses Choren. 2.27. For Atargatis-Dea Syria, see Van Berg (1972); Hörig (1979) and (1983), p.1536-81; Drijvers (1995), p.213-5; Wyatt (1995), p.207-12. See now also the contribution to this volume by M. Gaifman.

[85] *BMC Arabia*, p.119-24, pl.XVII.8-12,14.

[86] Ibid., p.122-3, pl.XVII.10-12.14.

It is obvious that the town during the Roman government as a Roman colony and as capital of a province possessed a 'Sebasteion'. However, we are not able to recognize to what degree the beliefs of the Hellenized and Romanized upper classes were shared by the indigenous part of the population. We do not know a single temple in this city: archaeological activities are lacking thus far, and would be desirable, as they would give us new information about the religious life of Nisibis. Only the ruins of a baptisterium, built by bishop Vologaises in AD 359, seem to have survived.[87]

Concluding Remarks

If we compare the results of our analysis, we find the very interesting fact that the religious life of Assur, Nineveh, and Nisibis differs substantially, even if these towns were geographically situated next to each other. First, language: all texts in Assur were written in Aramaic, most texts in the *polis* of Ninos, the *Colonia Augusta Felix Niniva Claudia*, in Greek, while from the Graeco-Roman metropolis Nisibis we have only the Greek legends on its coinage. Second, gods: the deities worshipped in Assur were mostly indigenous, though revived and portrayed in Parthian shape: the god Assur and his consort Serū, Bel with his daughter Nannai, and Nabu. In a syncretistic form only Herakles-Nergal appears there. In Ninos-Nineveh, the pantheon contained Apollo-Nabu and Heracles-Gad in a syncretistic form, and the purely Hellenistic and introduced deities Hermes and Sarapis with his consort Isis. Our knowledge about religious belief in Hellenistic and Roman Nisibis is very fragmentary. Apart from local Babylonian and Assyrian divinities, Syro-Phoenician deities are attested. As an introduced Hellenistic idea, Tyche was worshipped in this metropolis, alongside the local river god Mygdonios. In addition, a Sebasteion existed for the Roman imperial cult must certainly have existed in Nisibis as well. Third, religious architecture. The temple architecture in Assur was manifold. On the one hand the simple Babylonian type was introduced, and in Parthian times renewed and decorated with Graeco-Roman elements. Most temples in the city were of Parthian style, but mixed partially with Babylonian and always with Graeco-Roman constructive and/or decorative elements. The sanc-

[87] Sarre and Herzfeld (1920), p.337-42, fig.314-7, pl.CXXXVIII, CXXXIX.

tuaries in Ninos/Nineveh were made either by renewing the old Assyrian temples, like the one of Nabu, with elements derived from the Graeco-Roman world, or by adopting a profane building, like the southwest palace of Sennacherib was adopted for the worship of Heracles. Within the residential area of this polis, Hermes occupied a simple shrine of a Babylonian type. The building which served for the cult of Sarapis and Isis has still not been found or identified.

ASPECTS OF HATRENE RELIGION: A NOTE ON THE STATUES OF KINGS AND NOBLES FROM HATRA*

LUCINDA DIRVEN

Introduction

The present contribution examines life-size statues of human figures from Hatra, a pre-Islamic city located in the Jazirah in present-day Iraq.[1] So far, Hatra has yielded about three hundred freestanding statues and reliefs. Most of these sculptures are not dated, but it can safely be assumed that they date from the second half of the second and first half of the third century AD, when Hatra was at the peak of its prosperity.[2] About half of the sculptures represent one or several deities and thus have an overtly religious character. The remaining one hundred and twenty sculptures are statues of Hatrene kings and other prominent inhabitants. Their religious character is, of course, far less obvious than that of representations of gods. Although in the past, scholars like H. Ingholt and D. Homès-Fredericq stressed the religious qualities of these statues,[3] recent publications by K. Dijkstra and J.-B. Yon have put their secular character to the fore. They argued that the statues from Hatra are very similar to, for example, the honorary statues from Palmyra.[4] It is perhaps not

* I am grateful to Prof. Herman Brijder, Dr. Klaas Dijkstra, and Dr. Ted Kaizer for helpful suggestions and comments on earlier drafts of this article. Needless to say I bear sole responsibility for the final result.

[1] No catalogue of all the Hatrene sculptures has been published to date. Safar and Mustafa (1974) covers the finds until 1972, but unfortunately this book is in Arabic. Subsequent discoveries are scattered over various journals, notably *Sumer*, *Mesopotamia* and the *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*. Recently, S. Winckelmann has published an invaluable catalogue of all statues with arms from Hatra, see Winckelmann (2004), and J. Bouzek has written a short article on the Hatrene sculptures, see Bouzek (2004). The present author is preparing a catalogue of all published sculptures. This research, of which this article forms part, was conducted at the University of Amsterdam and was financed by UTOPA.

[2] On the date of sculptures from Hatra, see Mathiesen (1992), I p.73-7.

[3] Homès-Fredericq (1963), p.13; Ingholt (1954), p.10. Cf. Downey (1982), p.584.

[4] Dijkstra (1995), p.219; Yon (2002), p.12.

a coincidence that the studies by Dijkstra and Yon take the inscriptions as their starting point, whereas Ingholt and Homès-Fredericq focus on the sculptures and other material remains. The present contribution seeks to demonstrate that it is crucial that statues and inscriptions are studied simultaneously and are interpreted in their architectural and socio-religious context. It will be argued that the statues from Hatra have manifold meanings and fulfil a social as well as a religious function. If anything, it is this very intimate connection between the socio-political and the religious spheres that is typical of Hatra.

The Hatrene statues of kings and nobles nicely illustrate that there is more to religion than gods. In fact, it is only through people that we may hope to catch a glimpse of the supra-natural. Of course, this is true in general, but it is particularly so for cities in Syria and Mesopotamia under Roman and Parthian rule. The character of the material that stands at our disposal for reconstructing the religious worlds of Syrian and Mesopotamian cities during this period, forces us to interpret religion in its sociological, political and economical contexts. There are many things about Hatrene religion one cannot possibly know. This does not imply that Hatrene religion is bound to remain a mystery altogether. It does mean, however, that the historian of religions should attune his or her questions to the available sources. For this reason, a general introduction to Hatra's history and material remains will precede the description and analysis of the statues.

Hatra, the City of the Sun God

The spectacular archaeological remains of Hatra are located in the Jazirah, in present day Iraq, ca 80 km southwest of Mosul [PLATE I]. Research first started here at the beginning of the last century, with the German expedition led by W. Andrae, who was working in Assur at the time.[5] Since the nineteen-fifties, the town has been under excavation and restoration by Iraqi archaeologists. An Italian team led by R. Venco-Ricciardi worked with intervals at Hatra since 1987. Excavations came to an end in 2002, as a result of the explo-

[5] Andrae (1908-12). For Hatra's history of research, see Hauser (1998) and Venco-Ricciardi (2000).

sive political situation. The American-English invasion in Iraq of 2003 did not damage the site. At the moment of writing, however, the gradual exploding of an Iraqi arsenal by the allied forces at a short distance from Hatra poses a real threat to the ruins. The looting of museums that followed the occupation of Baghdad and Mosul by the American and English troops in the spring of 2003 greatly affected the state of sculptures and other finds from Hatra. Although it seems that fewer artefacts from Hatra were stolen than was initially feared, the exact condition and whereabouts of many objects are still uncertain five years after the ransacking. Just before the outbreak of the war, the Iraqi Antiquity Service moved many sculptures, which had until then been stored at Hatra, to the storerooms of the National Museum at Baghdad. During this process, many heads of live-size statues, which had previously been restored, were detached and transported separately to Baghdad; unfortunately, the joining parts were not marked. A substantial number of these statues were unpublished, and it is questionable whether it will ever be possible to reunite the heads with the bodies.[6]

Hatra is located in a region with an annual rainfall of less than 200mm, and may therefore truly be called a desert city. Although it has several watering points, it is important to stress that Hatra is not an oasis, like for example Palmyra was. Although it was of old a camping place for nomads, settlement can only be traced back to the first centuries BC. Most of the monuments that still stand today date from the second and the first half of the third century AD.[7] The city was conquered in AD 240 by the Sasanians, after a Roman garrison had been stationed there for a few years. It was probably quickly abandoned by a major part of the population, which explains the excellent preservation of its monuments, which all date from a fairly short period of time.

The reasons for Hatra's sudden growth are still a matter of conjecture. It falls beyond the scope of this paper to discuss this at

[6] For information on the current condition of the statues, I am greatly indebted to Professor Roberta Venco-Ricciardi of the University of Turin and to Franco Fornaris, a member of the Italian team of restoration, who worked in the National Museum in Baghdad in the spring of 2004.

[7] Parapetti and Venco-Ricciardi (2000), p.111-42, for the building history of the structures in the central temenos. For the history of the small shrines, see Safar (1974), p.350-72 (in Arabic) and Downey (1988), p.161-73.

length, but for a proper assessment of religion in the city, it is necessary to sketch the broad outlines of this development.[8] For the greater part of its history, Hatra was located on the fringe of the Parthian empire. The city was ruled by lords, later called kings, who were in all likelihood vassal-kings of the Parthian King of Kings. The city, particularly the territory around it, must have been of great strategic importance at the time. Roman historians tell us that on three occasions the troops of Trajan and Septimius Severus attempted in vain to conquer the city.[9] Several Hatrean inscriptions show that there was a close relationship between the people who had settled in the city and the people who adhered to a nomadic way of life.[10] Inscriptions refer to Hatrene rulers as 'king of Arab', which suggests that Hatra's territory was known as 'Arab' and that the nomadic population were called 'Arabs'.[11] The Hatrene rulers controlled the nomads that roamed the city's territory, and through them they controlled the entire region. So, in order to control the region, the Parthian kings allied themselves with the Hatrene rulers. The region around Hatra increased in significance after AD 165. At this time, the province of Oshroene fell into Roman hands and consequently Hatra's territory became the frontier of the Parthian empire.[12]

In all likelihood, Hatra not only functioned as a political, but also as a religious centre of the desert people in and around Hatra.[13] In my view, religion played a prominent role in the process that united the nomads with the settled population. In addition to political authority, the Hatrene rulers probably yielded supreme religious power as well.[14] In the past, Hatra has been characterised as a pil-

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[8] For a sketch of Hatra's history, see Drijvers (1977), p.803-37, Hauser (1998), and Sommer (2005).

[9] Trajan's failure in AD 117 (Dio 68.31) was followed by two attempts of Septimius Severus in AD 197 and 199 (Dio 75.1.1-3; 76.9.5-76.12; Herod. 3.1; 3.9). The Sasanian ruler Ardashir was defeated in AD 230 (Dio 80.3.2), but succeeded to take Hatra in 240. According to Ammianus Marcellinus (25.8.5), the city was deserted when Jovian and his troops passed the city with the dead body of Julian in AD 363/4. Literary sources praise the wealth of this city. For an overview of the written sources pertaining to Hatra, see Tubach (1986), p.228-35.

[10] Notably H79 and H336.

[11] Dijkstra (1990), p.96-7; Hauser (2000), p.191.

[12] Rightly pointed out by Hauser (1998), p.516. For the complicated relationship between Oshroene and Rome during these years, see Ross (2001), p.29-45.

[13] For a more extensive discussion, see Dirven (2006-7).

[14] This follows from several inscriptions, in which the Hatrene ruler Nasru is called 'great priest of the god Shamash' (*'pkl' rb' dšmš 'lh'*): H345 and Ibrahim (1986),

grimage centre.[15] This is an adequate description, if understood in a civic and regional sense.[16] This means that, as a pilgrimage centre, Hatra is more adequately compared with, for example, Panathenaic Athens, than with Islamic Mecca, a comparison that is traditionally drawn. The crucial role of religion for Hatra's development can be deduced from from the legend *ḥṭr' dšmš*, 'enclosure of Shamash (the sun god)' on Hatrene coins, which suggests that the whole city was dedicated to Shamash.[17] Several laws that were found in situ at the gates of the city decree that theft was a capital crime. Even in Antiquity, this was an extraordinarily severe punishment. This is best explained by Hatra's sacrosanct character: theft from the city is theft from the god and thereby a violation of the divine order.[18] The place of publication at the city gates not only exemplifies the importance inhabitants of Hatra attributed to this

p.198, nºIV = Vattioni (1994), p.28 = Beyer (1998), H1027. Admittedly, the function 'chief priest of the god Shamash' is only attested for lord Nasru. However, his son and successor Sanatruq is labelled priest (*kmr'*) and king (*mlk'*) in H384, inscribed below a priestly royal figure on a lintel from the Temple of Allat, see Ibrahim (1986), p.200. Aggoula (1991), p.171; Vattioni (1994), Beyer (1998), p.99-100 and Kaizer (2006b), p.149, assumed that Sanatruq is called 'priest of Allat' in this inscription. However, this reading is far from certain: all that remains of the presumed name of the goddess is the aleph (-'-). Although it is grammatically possible to reconstruct a status constructus, this is not likely. First, all instances read emph. *kmr'*, instead of constr. *kmr*. Second, it is more common at Hatra to indicate a genitive by using *dy*, 'of'. Be that as it may, the diadem with the eagle that Sanatruq wears on this relief (an attribute confined to the Hatrene king) suggests that he remained priest of the sun god Shamash, see al-Salihi (1985), p.131-2, p.137 and fig.43. The eagle was, after all, Shamash' animal. In addition, one may point to statues of Hatrene kings who carry statues of deities, such as the eagle and Barmaren. See below, p.222-3.

[15] Drijvers (1977), p.825: "eine Art von 'vormuslimischem Mekka'"; Altheim and Stiehl (1967), p.283; Schlumberger (1970), p.124; Segal (1986), p.58; Downey (1988), p.159; Dijkstra (1995), p.176-7.

[16] Following Hauser (2000), p.193-5, several scholars have recently stressed the role of commerce in Hatra's growth, see esp. Sommer (2003) and Freyberger (2004). Although commerce undoubtedly played a part in the city's growth and wealth, I disagree with the labelling of Hatra as a 'caravan city'. For a discussion of that term, as well as its use and misuse, see Millar (1998a). The fact that such a contested notion figures in the title of Sommer's publication, is misleading, to say the least.

[17] Walker (1958), p.167. See Dijkstra (1995), p.176-7, and Kaizer (2006b).

[18] The texts from the gates are H336, H342 and H344. A fourth text with a sacred law (H281) comes from the central temenos, see Dijkstra (1995), p.176-7. Recently, T. Kaizer has proposed a similar interpretation in an article on the legal texts, see Kaizer (2006b).

law, but also marks the border between the profane and the sacred, a demarcation that is typical of holy places.

Above all, the importance of religion for Hatra is apparent from the architectural remains and other finds from the city. Finds consist of sculptures, a few paintings, pottery, coins and, last but not least, about five hundred Aramaic inscriptions. The central role of religion is obvious from the huge walled enclosure in the centre of the almost circular city that in turn is surrounded by impressive fortifications (PLATE LXX). The temenos measures 440 by 320m, whilst the city as a whole is almost 2 km in diameter and comprises about 310ha. This means that the temenos comprises about one fifth of the total area of the city. The temenos is divided by a wall in an enormous forecourt and a smaller court, where the main structures are situated.

The enormous structure located at the back of the smaller court of the temenos is the most important one. It has a façade that is 110m long. Behind this façade are three separate buildings that in turn consist of enormous halls covered by barrel vaults; the so-called iwans. They are referred to as the southern, northern and twin iwans, respectively. A wall running from east to west divides the small court in two and separates the north and south iwans. A mysterious square structure was later built against the back of the south iwan. It has been identified as the main centre of worship of the complex, dedicated to Maren, alias Shamash. Although this is likely, proof to this effect is slight. We do know from the inscriptions that the complex was the home of Hatra's most important gods: Maren ('Our Lord') and Bar-Maren ('the Son of Our Lord').

In addition to the main temple, three more temples are situated in the west court; known as the temples of Shahiru, Samya and the triad. In all likelihood, none of the three names covers the actual cult. In the forecourt, against the back of the dividing wall, is a temple that was dedicated to Allat, and in the forecourt proper the 'Hellenistic Temple' is located; so-called because it looks Hellenistic, not because it dates back to this period.[19] Maren is the main recipient of the invocations preserved in this building.

Apart from the enormous religious complex in the city-centre, a further fourteen small shrines have been excavated in the domestic

[19] Downey (1988), p.161.

area around the temenos. By convention, they are known according to the sequence in which they were excavated. Since the deities to whom the small shrines were dedicated are frequently unknown, it is probably best to maintain this tradition. Most temples consist of a broad pronaos with a shallow naos projecting from the centre of its back wall, a so-called reversed T. It is also referred to as a Babylonian ground plan, a name that alludes to its millennia-old tradition in the region. Some of Hatra's small shrines are situated in a courtyard, whereas others open directly onto the street. This is unusual for temples of a Babylonian ground plan. It stands in marked contrast with contemporary exponents of this tradition, such as the temples from Dura-Europos. At Dura, the main temple units are situated at the back of the court, screened off from the street by the enclosure wall.

Within the city, around five hundred inscriptions have been found. With a few exceptions, all are written in the local Aramaic 'Hatrean' script.[20] Most of these are not very long or informative texts: they give us the names and dates of local rulers, names of certain functionaries and the names of deities. Only a few are slightly longer. In addition to the inscriptions, we have the representations of people and gods. Unlike in Dura-Europos, for example, wall paintings are rare in Hatra. Most representations consist of sculptures: either architectural decoration, or stelae, statues and figurines.

In a nutshell, this is what we have. What we do *not* have are local literary sources: there are no economic documents, no ritual texts and no theological treatises. In these matters we know much more about the preceding periods (Ancient Mesopotamia) than we do about Hatra. So what can we, on the basis of this material, say about the religion of Hatra? As for theology and ritual, we know very little. On the basis of inscriptions we can tell which deities were worshipped in the city. If we are lucky, their names are inscribed on reliefs and statues, so than we can tell what they looked like. But then, what do a name and physical appearance tell us about these gods? Is it possible to read the character of a deity from his or her appearance? This, of course, is a most precarious undertaking. Alter-

[20] Inscriptions from Hatra are numbered according to their sequence of publication: Hatra n^{os}1,2,etc., henceforth abbreviated H1,2,etc. The corpus of texts was published several times. Most important are Aggoula (1991), Vattioni (1981) and (1994) and Beyer (1998).

natively, we can try to look for the same names in other places and other periods. Again, this is not without risks. In contrast to what theologians want us to believe, gods are not eternal and their characters do change according to time and place. The particular character of a deity is very much determined by the local pantheon at a specific time. This does not, of course, exclude the possibility that some general characteristics may be attributed to deities over time and place.

Studied from this point of view, a description of the religion of Hatra can only scratch the surface of what the religious life in the city once was.[21] We know it was the city of Shamash, the sun god. We also know that Shamash was probably known as Maren, 'Our Lord', and that there was a divine triad that consisted of Maren, Marten and Bar-Maren. We know that these deities were worshipped in the main temples of the central temenos. We also happen to know the names of some other deities, such as Atargatis, Baal-Shamin, Nergal, Nannai and Nabu. We may subsequently try to find out which gods were behind Maren and Bar-Maren and speculate about the reasons for the existence of a divine triad. We may wonder about the fact that the main temple was still called 'Esagila', like the temple of Marduk in Babylon, and that Nabu is called the 'scribe of Maren', just like the Babylonian god who was the scribe of his father Marduk.[22] But then, what does this mean? These hints at continuity are intriguing, but does it follow that Nabu was the son of Maren in Hatra as well? We cannot possibly know. For this reason, these are perhaps not the right questions to ask.

Does this mean we have to be satisfied with an enumeration of the deities that were worshipped and the constellations in which they appear? I think not. We may try to reconstruct the socio-religious organisation of the city, i.e. to study the function of religion in its Durkheimian sense. In fact, Hatra is particularly suited to this approach: here we have an entire city, more or less as it was when people left it in the middle of the third century! This means we are unusually well informed about the context of the finds, which is crucial to a proper understanding of remains of material culture.

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[21] For a general overview of Hatrene religion, see Hoftijzer (1968), p.51-61, and Kaizer (2000b).

[22] *sgyl*: H191, H202xix/q, H225, H240, H244-246; *nbw spr'dy mrn*: H389. Cf. Dijkstra (1995), p.196, with n.52.

The life-size statues of kings and nobles are a good starting point for such an interpretation. In the following, I shall start by introducing them and specifying why they are such a rich source of information. Secondly, I shall address the question of what they reveal about the socio-religious organisation of the city. Comparison with contemporary material from Palmyra will be important in this argument. I hope to show that, more than the statues from Palmyra, those from Hatra preserved their religious significance. I shall conclude by trying to shed some light upon this religious character. I shall do so by interpreting these statues in the context of textual and material remains from the Ancient Near East, which may be traced back to the third millennium BC.

The Material

In total, I have described about one hundred and twenty life-size statues in the round for the catalogue of Hatrene sculptures. It is impossible to establish the exact number. Many statues are fragmentary and often have their heads missing. On the other hand, a great many heads have been found separately from their bodies. The present calculation is based on the torsos, but the heads show that the number of statues was certainly higher. With a few exceptions, all statues are slightly larger than life-size (about 1.90m high). They were carved to be seen from the front, since their backs and sides are only roughly worked. The life-size statues are made of two types of stone, the so-called Mosul marble (which is in fact not real marble, but a greyish-white limestone that originates from the region around Mosul) and a local yellow limestone.[23] The Mosul marble is, of course, the more precious stone of the two. In addition to statues made of stone, several life-size bronze feet have been found. There must thus have been life-size statues made of bronze as well. Bronze statues are best known from the spectacular finds from Shami in southern Iran. Closer by, at Uruk-Warka, life-size bronze feet shot in Hellenistic sandals were found.[24] Bronze statues were also common in Palmyra, but there they are known primarily from the texts.[25]

[23] On the material and stone-carving techniques of Hatrene sculptures, see Colledge (1977), p.135-40.

[24] Van Ess and Pedde (1992), pls. 16, 89, 90.

[25] Colledge (1976), p.90, on bronzes from Palmyra; Kawami (1987), p.169-70, on the bronze male figure from Shami.

Of these one hundred and twenty statues, about forty-two are accompanied by an inscription. In addition, we possess twenty-two inscriptions that cannot be connected with a statue. The text is inscribed on the base of the statue. Frequently, this base consists of two parts: a shallow base that is attached to the statue, and an unconnected larger pedestal or bracket that may contain the remainder of the text.

These texts may be divided into four groups. First we have twenty-one texts that simply say *ṣlm' dy*, 'image of', followed by a personal name.[26] A second group of inscriptions not only identify the person represented, but also state by whom the statue was erected. Here we may distinguish between various possibilities. Twice people set up a statue of themselves.[27] Twice it is a deity who erected the statue.[28] By far the greatest amount of inscriptions that belong to this group, twenty-four instances, inform us that the statue was erected by an individual other than the figure represented.[29] Sometimes this was done by family members: we know of husbands erecting statues of their wives,[30] sons of their fathers or mothers,[31] and a nephew of his uncle.[32] In the majority of these instances, however, there is no question of a family relationship. When family ties are absent, the dedicant and represented figure may be of equal social status. On two occasions, for example, the dedicant identifies himself as a friend. In a further five inscriptions the dedicant has a rank equal to the individual represented by the statue.[33] It is equally

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[26] H21, H39, H105, H109, H111, H113, H115, H142-3, H198, H226, H348, H350, H352-3, H361, H366, H382, H400, H404, al-Salihi (1980), nº4. If the inscription does not specify the identity of the person who ordered it, it is most plausible to assume that the represented figure ordered it for him or herself. It has to be kept in mind, though, that the brief formula is the first line of an inscription that originally was much longer. This may be inferred from H144, the image of Worod *rbyt'*, erected for the life of king Sanatruq, following the reading by Aggoula (1991).

[27] H20* and H35*; probably also H144*. See below, n.35.

[28] H38 and H228 were erected by Isharbel and Bar-Maren respectively. This means, of course, that the temples of these gods paid for the statue. It is perhaps not without significance that both are statues of women. Cf. above, p.181, n.10.

[29] In addition to the instances cited in the following notes, there are three inscriptions from which it follows that dedicant and the figure represented differ: H80, H28, H287.

[30] H5, H30 and H112.

[31] H80, H34* and H351.

[32] H405*.

[33] Friends: H381, H145; status not specified: H83; same rank: H362 (both *rbyt'*),

possible, however, that the dedicant is a dependant of the figure represented by the statue and is socially inferior to him or her; this is the case with nine statues of members of the royal house, erected by devoted subjects.[34]

Among the statues from the second group, there are twelve instances that not only reveal the identity of the statue and the dedicant, but also add the formula *'l ḥyy*, 'for the life of'.[35] In some of these inscriptions, particularly where family members are concerned, the beneficiary of the prayers is the figure represented.[36] Alternatively, the person for whose life blessings are asked is the dedicant of the statue.[37] Finally, there are inscriptions in which the beneficiary is a third person, who is neither the dedicant nor the figure represented by the statue. This complex way of blessing a person by way of another occurs four times in Hatra.[38] It is notable that in all these cases the beneficiary is a member of the royal house and that the inscriptions and accompanying statues come from the central temple complex. The formula *'l ḥyy* is quite common in religious dedications throughout the Near East in this period. However, only in Hatra is it used in the dedication of life-size statues of humans. I shall come back to the meaning of this formula in the discussion below of the social and religious implications of the statues.[39]

H223* (idem), H224 (idem), H364 (*rbyt' dy 'rb* and *rbyt' dbrmryn*), Andrae (1908-12), II, p.162*. Since we have seven instances of people with the same social status against nine instances of an unequal relationship (below, n.34), there is no reason to conclude with Dijkstra (1995), p.219, that as a rule the dedicant depends on the person represented.

[34] H36 (princess), H79, H139*-40*, H193, H195*, H345-7.

[35] H405, H140 (AD 205), H80 (AD 237), H34 (AD 235), H35 (AD 238), H20, H28, H139, H195, H223, H287, H144. These inscriptions are already referred to in the previous footnotes, where they are marked with an asterisk (*). It shows the formula is used in all social constellations.

[36] H405, H140, H35, H20.

[37] H80, H34, Andrae (1908-12), II, p.162. In two of these inscriptions, the blessings are indirectly asked for the persons represented by the statues. In H34, the dedicant and benificiary is the son of the figure represented by the statue. But the statue is also erected for the life of the other members of the family to which the person represented also belongs. In Andrae (1908-12), II, p.162, the dedicant and beneficiary is a priest of Bar-Maren. The statue is also erected for the life of other priests of Bar-Maren, a group to which the figure represented also belongs.

[38] H139, H223, H195, H144. Two other inscriptions that were erected for the life of a king, H28 and H287, can no longer be used since the identity of the represented person is not known.

[39] One inscription, H79, falls outside these four categories, in that it is unusually long and informative.

Quite a few inscriptions were found with the statues they relate to. In some cases these inscriptions help to date the statues. Many inscriptions identify the person represented, which enables us to connect a number of titles and offices to certain outward aspects. In fact, the iconography of Hatrene sculptures is so fixed, that the characteristics identified allow the identification of anonymous statues. What stands out when one studies these statues is the limited variation with respect to dimensions, pose, costume and attributes. Little attention has been paid to individual facial features. In fact, even humans of great prominence, such as the Hatrene kings, are recognizable only by their hairstyle and headdress, and not by individual outward characteristics. There is a great sense of 'professionalism' in these statues: people 'look like' their social position. Without accompanying inscription, it is impossible to tell which particular individual is represented. Since this professionalism is obviously such an important feature of Hatrene sculpture, the material will be presented here accordingly.

Kings

In total, twenty-seven life-size statues can certainly be identified as representations of kings.[40] Five headless statues are probably kings

[40] Found in the central temenos: 1) 7/H/182: from the south iwan, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.5; 2) 6/H/263: head from the north iwan, ibid., fig.7; 3) 11/H/355: head from the north iwan, ibid., fig.6; 4) 7/H/538: from the Square Temple, ibid., fig.2; 5) 8/H/247: from the Square Temple, ibid., fig.3; 6) 8/H/248: from the Square Temple, ibid., fig.4; 7) 6/H/262: head and feet from the Square Temple, ibid., fig.8; 8) 13/H/460: from the Triad Temple, ibid., fig.19; 9) Statue of Sanatruq from the Temple of Allat, al-Salihi (1998), fig.3; 10) 13/H/454: from the temple court, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.15; 11) 12/H/382: from the temple court, ibid., fig.12; 12) 13/H/427: from the temple court, ibid., fig.13; 13) 13/H/464: from the temple court, ibid., fig.14; 14) 13/H/442: unfinished statue from the temple court, storeroom Baghdad HE-13; 15) Statue from the east gate, al-Salihi (1991), p.35-40, fig.1-3; 16) statue from north gate, Stucky (1978), nº160; 17) 1/H/100: from Temple 3, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.197; 18) 1/H/102: from Temple 3, ibid., fig.198; 19) 4/H/147: from Temple 10, ibid., fig.301; 20) 4/H/173: from Temple 10, ibid., fig.305; 21) 5/H/85: from Temple 11, ibid., fig.324. 22-23) two unfinished statues from Temple 11, unpublished; 24) unpublished head with tripartite hairstyle in storeroom in the museum in Baghdad, HE-144; 25) unpublished head with diadem and eagle, in storeroom in the museum in Baghdad, HE-75/28. 26) fragmentary statue of a royal figure clad in a richly decorated tunic and trousers, carrying a small statue in front of his belly, head is missing, in Baghdad storeroom, HE 102/2+4+5 (in all likelihood published in *Sumer* (1983), provenance not clear; 27) larger than life-size relief of Sanatruq I, right hand raised, palm branch in raised

in view of their sumptuous clothing.[41] By far the majority of the royal statues come from the central temenos. The so-called Square Temple, the most important religious building in the temenos, yielded an unusual large amount of royal statues. Kings also figured prominently at the city gates. Some statues of kings were found in the small temples, but compared to finds from the central temenos, they are few.

Kings are readily identified by three exclusive characteristics: the exceptionally rich decoration of their clothing, their hairstyles and their headdresses (PLATE LXXI). Most kings wear a richly embroidered, long-sleeved tunic, with equally ornate Parthian trousers.[42] In addition, some wear a sleeveless caftan. Many statues have elaborately worked belts. These belts are, apparently, confined to kings. Three royal statues wear a knee-length tunic and a himation and have bare legs and feet.[43] This outfit is characteristic of Hatrene priests and these statues represent the king in his priestly function.

Equally characteristic for the Hatrene kings is their coiffure and headdress. The kings are the only individuals, with the possible exception of princes, that have a bipartite or tripartite hairdo.[44] The bipartite hairdo, with two large bunches of hair, was fashionable during the reign of Sanatruq I.[45] His successor Sanatruq II preferred the tripartite hairdo. In addition to the hairdo, the headdress is the most distinctive feature of Hatrene kings. It consists either of a tiara,

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left hand, facial features obliterated, found close to North Gate, al-Salihi (1980), fig.34. NB Apart from these life-size statues, kings are represented on the stones of arches, lintels and reliefs.

[41] 1) 6/H/298: headless statue without arms from the temple court, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.18.2) 5/H/97: headless statue without arms from the great iwan, ibid., fig.22. 3) 7/H/542: headless statue without arms from the Temple of Shahiru, ibid., fig.23. 4) 17/H/622: headless statue found close to North Gate, al-Salihi (1980), 176, fig. 31.5) 14/H/565: badly weathered and unfinished statue from the court of the central temenos, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.17.

[42] On Hatrene dress, see Goldman (1994), p.174-9.

[43] See above, n.40, n^{os}6,8,15. The first two come from sanctuaries in the central temenos, the last from the East Gate. A representation of Sanatruq I on a lintel from the Temple of Allat is identified as priest-king by the accompanying inscription.

[44] Early Hatrene rulers, such as Lord Nasru, sometimes wear their hair in one big knot on their head. A lintel from Temple 5 identifies the reclining figure with knot as Nasru, see Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.237. The priest from the east gate (see above, n.40, n^{o}15), is in all likelihood to be identified as Nasru as well.

[45] All identifiable statues of this king have the tripartite hairdo, see above, n.40, n^{os}12,16.

or of a diadem that has an eagle with outspread wings standing on the centre. Sometimes, the diadem with the eagle is tied around the tiara.[46] It is noteworthy that the tiara and the diadem are only introduced at the time that kingship was installed at Hatra.[47] This accords well with the remarks of ancient authors, who note that the Parthian kings gave vassal kings the right to wear the tiara.[48] The Hatrene tiara was clearly inspired by the fashion at the Parthian court. Like the tiara that was worn by Vologases IV, the Hatrene tiaras have neck flaps. A unique feature of the Hatrene tiara is the eagle discussed above. The eagle is the attribute or personification of Shamash, Hatra's supreme deity, and is clearly to be understood as a reference to the main cult. In his function as priest, the king does not wear the tiara, but the diadem with the eagle.[49]

Most kings stand with their right hands raised, palms turned outward. Their left hands are lowered and either hold a palm branch or rest on a long sword.[50] Five life-size statues of kings carry a statuette of a beardless deity.[51] A statue of a priest-king that was found

[46] Most tiaras of Hatrene kings have the diadem with the eagle. This feature is missing from the royal statue that was found at the north gate (see above, n.40, nº16) and from the statue of king Atlu and its counterpart (ibid., nºs17-8). These last two statues are in all likelihood non-Hatrene rulers.

[47] The first Hatrene ruler who is represented with a tiara is Vologash, identified as 'king of Arab' by the accompanying inscription (H193), see above, n.40, nº1. Although the statue is headless, the neck flap can still be seen at the back.

[48] The Jewish historian Josephus notes in his account of the kingdom of Adiabene, that Artabanus II, the Parthian king of kings, permitted the Armenian ruler Izates to wear the tiara and to sleep on a bed of gold. Both were privileges and symbols that belonged only to the kings of Parthia (*Ant.* 20.67).

[49] In addition to the three instances under discussion, there are several royal heads with a diadem with an eagle, see above, n.40, nºs2,3,7. The motif also occurs on the busts of kings that decorate the arches of temples, some of which are probably priest-kings. However, the eagle-diadem does not unequivocally testify to a priestly function: at least two royal figures combine a diadem with eagle with tunic and trousers, instead of priestly garb. See above, n.40, nºs10,19, and possibly also nº7, if head and feet indeed belong together.

[50] Palm branch and sword are never combined. For statues of kings with palm branch, see above, n.40, nºs9-10,12-4,17,19,21 and in all likelihood also 20. The pose is also frequent with royal figures represented on stones of arches. In one instance, a king does not raise his right hand, but holds an unidentified round object, see ibid., nº18. For statues of kings with sword, see ibid., nºs1,17. Although the sword is missing, it follows from the attachment belt that nº18 carried a sword as well, and the same holds true for a headless statue found at the North Gate, see above, n.41,nº4.

[51] Above, n.40 nºs3,5,6 (all from the Square Temple), 16 (from the North Gate) and 26 (of unknown provenance).

at the east gate of the city carries an eagle.[52] Carrying a statuette is a privilege of the Hatrene king. When represented as a priest, the king may be represented in the conventional priestly pose with his right arm bent over the body, reaching out for a flat incense box.

Princes

In addition to statues of kings, we know of at least five representations of princes; four are of Abdsamya, the son of Sanatruq I, and one is of his brother Nyhra (PLATE LXXII).[53] They come either from the central temenos or from the North Gate. Unlike the kings, these figures have short curly hair and are clean-shaven. Clean-shaven figures are quite rare in representations of male human beings from Hatra: apart from the princely figures, this is also found among representations of priests. As with the figures of kings, the tunics and trousers of the princes are richly decorated. They are represented with their right hands raised, palms turned outward, and with a palm branch in their lowered left hand. A statue of Abdsamya from the Temple of Allat carries a cultic standard.[54]

Priests

In total, twenty representations have been found that can certainly be identified as priests.[55] Seventeen of these are life-size statues.

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[52] Ibid., n°15.

[53] 1) 8/H/245: identified by H195 as prince Abdsamya, from the Square Temple, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.9. 2) 8/H/246: identified by H198 as prince Nyhra, from the Square Temple, ibid., fig.10. 3) life-size statue from the Temple of Allat, identified by H376 as Abdsamya, al-Salihi (1998), fig.3. 4) Prince Abdsamya is represented with his father on the lintel from the Temple of Allat. 5) From the North Gate comes a larger than life-size relief that is identified by an inscription as Abdsamya, al-Salihi (1980), n°4.

[54] See above, n.53, n°3. In addition, three statues of nobles carry cultic standards, see below, n.73, n°1,2,3.

[55] King-priests (n°s1-4): 1) Sanatruq I on lintel from the Temple of Allat. 2) 8/H/248: from the Square Temple. 3) Statue of priest with statuette of eagle from the east gate. 4) 13/H/460: from the Triad Temple, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.19). Priests (n°s5-20): 5) unpublished fragmentary statue from Temple 4. 6) 2/H/162: from Temple 5, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.244. 7) 2/H/112: from Temple 5, ibid., fig.245. 8) 3/H/8: from Temple 6, ibid., fig.252. 9) 4/H/134: miniature temple from Shrine 10, ibid., fig.302. 10) 5/H/87: from Temple 11, ibid., fig.325. 11) bearded priest from Temple 12, Abdullah (1984), p.105, fig.14. 12) headless statue of a priest from Temple 12, dated by H405 to AD 205. 13) fragmentary relief representing two priests and a boy offering from Temple 13. 14) unpublished

Their identification as priests rests primarily upon the typical priestly clothing, consisting of a knee-length tunic with long sleeves and a himation worn diagonally around the body (PLATE LXXIII). The himation of many priestly figures has an H-shaped application on the front.[56] As a rule, the lower legs and feet are bare. Three priestly statues can be identified as kings. They wear a priestly outfit that is more elaborately decorated. One was found at the east gate, the others come from various buildings inside the central temenos. Only one statue of a non-royal priest originates from the central temenos, whereas ten statues of priests come from the smaller shrines.

Of the seventeen life-size statues that can certainly be identified as priests, nine have heads. Seven heads wear a plain conical headdress that covers the hair completely and leaves the ears free.[57] Most of them are bearded, but a priest from Temple 14 is clean-shaven.[58] Of the three priests that are bare-headed, two have a beard, whereas one is beardless.[59] On the basis of the available evidence it is not easy to explain these differences. Neither can we be

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statue of bearded priest from Temple 14. 15) unpublished statue of another bearded priest from Temple 14. 16) unpublished statue of clean-shaven priest from Temple 14. 17) unpublished statue, in all likelihood from Temple 7 (HE-100), expedition inventory probably 3/H/23. 18) 12/H/393: from the court of the great temenos, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig,20. 19) unpublished statue of a clean-shaven and bare-headed priest of unknown provenance, on display in the museum in Baghdad. 20) unpublished statue of a priest on display in the museum in Baghdad, finding place not known, head missing, statue standing on a base with an inscription in two lines, not readable from the photograph, material, pose and garment are very similar to another unpublished statue of a priest as described above, n°17. NB 8/H/244, from the central temenos, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.1, may perhaps be identified as a priest, despite the fact that legs and head are missing; the way the himation is worn over the decorated tunic is typical of priests in Hatra; unfortunately, the H-shaped ornament is not visible in the photograph; the decoration on the tunic favours an identification as a king.

[56] This is the case with the representations of three out of the four king-priests, see above, n.52, n°s1-3. The himation of the majority of the priestly figures has the same ornament, though less richly adorned. With several statues the form is only incised. Note, however, that this is also the case with the statue of the king-priest from the east gate. It is noteworthy that the ornament is missing with the three priests from Temple 14, ibid., n°s10-2.

[57] Above, n. 52 n°s 6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18.

[58] Ibid n°16.

[59] Bare-headed priests with beard, see ibid., n°s5,8; priest without headdress and beard, see ibid., n°19.

certain that all types of priests are represented.[60] In view of the variety, it is a hazardous undertaking to identify heads that were found detached from a body as heads of priests. The conical headdress is an indication in this direction, but unfortunately some military figures wear a helmet that is sometimes very similar to the priestly bonnet.[61]

In spite of the variety of facial features, the heads seem to have one characteristic that typifies them as priests: a circle incised on both cheekbones. These marks can be seen on six heads. It is attested on priestly figures with and without headdress, as well as on priests both bearded and beardless.[62] Not only is this a feature common to all priests, it is also never attested among statues of other dignitaries at Hatra.[63] Parallels for this feature are not found among contemporary representations of priests from the Roman and Parthian Near East. In all likelihood, therefore, the circle is an identity marker of Hatrene priests.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell from the statues whether this body-mark is made by scarification, branding or tattooing. Both sacred branding and tattooing were practised in the lands of the eastern Mediterranean in the Graeco-Roman period.[64] Particularly

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[60] There are several types that are possibly priests, but that cannot be identified as such, since they were never found together with a body. At least three clean-shaven heads wear hats that resemble those normally worn by priests. However, contrary to the usual priestly bonnet, these hats do not cover the hair completely. Other figures wear a Phrygian cap: 7/H/259 and 7/H/181, both found in front of the Temple of Shahiru, see Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.67-8; 3/H/29, bust on stone of the arch of Temple 8, ibid., fig.262; 6/H/105: small bronze head with Phrygian cap from the Hellenistic Temple, ibid., fig.154.

[61] See below, n.70.

[62] Priests with headdress and beard, see above, n.52, n^{os}6,14-5; priests with hat without beard, ibid., n^{o}16; priest without headdress with beard, ibid., n^{o}8; clean-shaven priests without headdress, ibid., n^{o}19. The priests of ibid., n^{os}9,13 are too small or too damaged to distinguish this feature. With the priest n^{o}11, from Temple 12, the published photograph does not allow us to discern this feature.

[63] The feature is found with several heads that were found separate from their bodies. If our interpretation is correct, they may be identified as heads of priests. Bare-headed with beard: 2/H/158: from Temple 4, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.216). Clean shaven heads: 1) 11/H/344: the so-called 'head of Trajan', ibid., fig.71; 2) 7/H/181: ibid., fig.72; 3) 7/H/274: ibid., fig.120; 4) 6/H/140: ibid., fig.121. It is noteworthy that all clean-shaven heads come from the Temple of Samya or from its proximity. Possibly, this type of priest is related to the cult in this temple.

[64] Jones (1987), p.144-5 and p.152-4.

close in time and place is the custom in Hierapolis in northern Syria. In his treatise on the cult of the Syrian goddess, Lucian states that all her devotees are tattooed on their wrists or necks.[65] Unlike in Hierapolis, not all people in Hatra have tattoos. The fact that the practice is confined to priests does, however, fit perfectly with the concept of religious tattooing that marks the devotee as property of a god.[66] In this respect, the religious practice resembles the tattooing of slaves, a custom that was common in the ancient world.[67] That temple staff were indeed considered the property of the gods at Hatra, follows from one of the laws found at the city gates. It decrees that female servants of Maren, Marten and Bar-Maren shall be put to death if they leave their place, in other words the city.[68]

Military

At least twenty-four statues can be identified as military, because of the long sword and the cloak that is fastened on the right shoulder by a brooch (PLATE LXXIV).[69] Most wear a simple, long-sleeved tunic and plain trousers. The deep u-folds on these trousers suggest

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[65] *De Dea Syria* 59 (henceforth abbreviated *DDS*). Lucian's account is confirmed by an Egyptian papyrus of the mid-second century that contains a description of a runaway slave from Hierapolis, who is tattooed on the right wrist with two Barbarian letters, see *Ppar.* 10.8-9. Lucian uses the word *stizontai*, which in all likelihood means tattoos rather than brand-marks or incisions. Cf. Lightfoot (2003), p.529-31, who noted that Lucian's claim that all devotees of Atargatis are tattooed has confused many modern commentators. The restricted use at Hatra is more in line with the idea of religious tattooing.

[66] Illustrative is Herodotus' report (2.113.1) of an Egyptian sanctuary dedicated to Heracles, where runaway slaves apply sacred stigmata in order to give themselves to the god.

[67] Jones (1987), p.147-8 and p.152.

[68] H342, l.4-6 speak of *kwl zmrt' wqynt' dy mrn wmrtn [w]brmryn*, 'any female singer and wailing woman of Maren, Marten and Bar-Maren'.

[69] Many military statues originate from the Temple of Shahiru (n^{os}1-7): 1) 7/H/564: Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.28. 2) 7/H/551: ibid., fig.29. 3) 6/H/558: ibid., fig.35. 4) 6/H/144: ibid., fig.42. 5) 7/H/538: ibid., fig.37. 6) 6/H/19: ibid., fig.24. 7) 6/H/143: ibid., fig.25; from the central temenos (n^{os}8-14): 8) 7/H/219: ibid., fig.30. 9) 13/H/446: ibid., fig.31. 10) 7/H/216: ibid., fig.33. 11) 7/H/217: ibid., fig.38. 12) 7/H/218: ibid., fig.44. 13) 7/H/215: ibid., fig.45. 14) 8/H/236. From the Square Temple, ibid., fig.32. 15) 6/H/297: from iwan 4, ibid., fig.34. 16) 5/H/103: from the south iwan, ibid., fig.46. 17) no field number: from the great temple, ibid., fig.39. Outside the central temenos, from Temple 4 (n^{os}18-21): 18) 2/H/113: ibid., fig.212. 19) 2/H/166: ibid., fig.214. 20) 2/H/165: ibid., fig.215. 21) 2/H/152 and 2/H/167: ibid., fig.213. From Temple 5: 22) 2/H/163: ibid., fig.246. From Temples 13 or 14: 23) fragmentary statue, see Abdullah (1984), fig.14.

that they are actually leggings, but since the tunics cover the upper legs, it is often not possible to confirm this. Some soldiers wear a high rounded headdress that covers their hair completely and leaves the ears free.[70] It greatly resembles the hats associated with Hatrene priests. The headdresses of the soldiers are slightly more rigid, which suggests that they are made of a different material than the priestly bonnet, probably metal. Furthermore, contrary to the plain priests' hats, the helmets are set off with a string of small beads along the rim and the crest. Some examples have a plain band along the rim. All military figures stand with their right hands raised, palms turned outward. With most statues, the lowered left hand rests on the hilt of a long sword. Several statues, however, hold a long, rounded object in their left hand. [71] In all likelihood it is a book-scroll or *schedula*, an object that is common in honorary statues as well as in funerary stelae from Palmyra.[72] Many military statues are found in the Temple of Shahiru. A number of figures with a similar outfit come from shrine 4.

Nobles

A fifth group comprises twenty-one statues of men whose function and social position were not characterised by any particular attribute. For reasons of convenience, I call them nobles.[73] With one exception, all wear a long-sleeved tunic and trousers (PLATE LXXV).

From the Temple of Allat: 24) fragmentary statue, see Najafi (1983), p.197-8, pl.8 (with H382; *'sppṭ'*).

[70] See above, n.69, n^{os}1-2,12,21. In addition, several heads with the same headdress were found: 6/H/168: Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.64-5.

[71] See above, n.69, n^{os}12-3.

[72] Colledge (1976), p.68-9 and p.90.

[73] From the central temenos: 1) 14/H/466: Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.47. 2) 62/H/255: ibid., fig.48. 3) 13/H/450: ibid., fig.49. 4) 7/H/547: ibid., fig.21. From the Temple of Allat: 5-6) Salman (1974), fig.d, with H363-4. From the Temple of Shahiru. 7) 6/H/556: Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.52. 8) 6/H/549: ibid., fig.53. 9) 7/H/554. From the Temple of Shahiru: ibid., fig.40. 10) 7/H/541: ibid., fig.50. 11) 6/H/555: ibid., fig.61. 12) 6/H/151: ibid., fig.42. 13) 4/H/176 from iwan 12, ibid., fig.43. 14) from iwan 4, ibid., fig.51. 15) 1/H/117 and 1/H/111 from Temple 3: ibid., fig.200. 16) 1/H/101 from Temple 3, ibid., fig.199. 17) 3/H/7 from Temple 6, ibid., fig.251. 18) 5/H/86 from Temple 11, ibid., fig.326. 19) 5/H/84 from Temple 11, ibid., fig.327. 20) 3/H/24 from Temple 7, ibid., fig.261. 21) unpublished statue from Temple 14, on display in the National Museum of Baghdad in the spring of 2004.

With two statues the tunic is combined with a sleeveless coat.[74] With few exceptions, the decoration of the clothing is sparse and confined to discs or bands made of discs. Although some have an elaborately worked belt and most wear a dagger, only one of the statues has a sword. A number of statues wear necklaces with a square pendant.[75]

Of the twenty, only six statues were found with head. All are bareheaded, but five have a moustache and beard; the sixth is clean-shaven.[76] Three statues carry a cultic standard.[77] Perhaps they are *rb smy'*, 'master of the standard'. Some statues of nobles may be identified as high officials, *rbyt'*, from the accompanying inscription. Compared to statues of other nobles, their clothing is exceptionally richly decorated.[78] The remaining figures stand with their right hands raised, palms turned outward and with an object in their lowered left hand. Five hold a small rectangular object, probably a *schedula*.[79] The majority of the statues, however, hold palm branches.[80]

Highly unusual is an unpublished statue from shrine 14, that was on display in the National Museum in the spring of 2004. Unlike the other figures, this headless statue wears a richly embroidered tunic with a V-shaped neckline and trousers that are equally sumptuously decorated. The right forearm is not raised with the palm of the hand turned outwards, but bent up by the figure's side. It probably held an object that is now missing. In his lowered left hand, the man holds a long narrow object made of thin reeds. At first sight, one has the impression that it is a sword, but since the attachment belt is missing, this is most unlikely. Instead, the object greatly resembles a barsom, a sacred bundle made of twigs that is used in Iranian ritual for prayer.[81]

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[74] See above, n.73, n^{os}4-5.

[75] See above, n.73, n^{o}4 from the central temenos, n^{o}5 from the Temple of Allat and n^{os}7-9 from the Temple of Shahiru. Another statue from the Temple of Shahiru, n^{o}11, has a round medallion.

[76] See above, n.73; with beard, n^{os}1,6,11,15-7; clean-shaven, n^{o}5.

[77] See above, n.73, n^{os}1-3, all from the temple court. For the 'master of the standard', see H56 from Temple 5.

[78] H364 with Najafy (1983), p.185, from the facade of the Temple of Allat; H381 with ibid., p.197-8, pl.8, both from the Temple of Allat.

[79] See above, n.73, n^{os}11-3, from the Temple of Shahiru, n^{o}15 from Temple 3 and n^{o}17 from Temple 6.

[80] See above, n.73, n^{os}4-9,14,18-20.

[81] The shape and length of the object greatly resemble the barsom held by the god Mithra on the rock relief that represents Shapur II and the emperor Julian in

Women

The sixth and last group of life-size statues comprises women. So far, thirteen statues of women have been found at Hatra, a far smaller number than statues of men.[82] This is undoubtedly due to their lower social status. Possibly, this also explains why most statues of women were found in the small shrines. Women in Hatra wear an ample floor-length robe with, on top, an Asian version of the sleeveless chiton (PLATE LXXVI). It is pinned at the shoulder and falls to midcalf. One side is left open and draped, and the whole is unbelted. The women wear tall headdresses consisting of several vertical bands.[83] The headdress is frequently adorned with necklaces to which temple pendants are attached in a number of cases.[84] It

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Taq-i Bustan, see Vanden Berghe (1993), p.77, fig.61. Cf. Krumeich (1998), p.184, for more examples and references for further reading. The closest parallels from Hatra are several representations of the god Nabu that come from Temple 12. In his lowered hand the god holds a bundle of reeds that is slightly shorter than the object carried by the figure under discussion. Like our figure, Nabu wears a tunic with a V-shaped neckline and has his right hand raised next to his head. These similarities suggest that the statue from Temple 14 is of Nabu instead of a noble, especially since the iconography deviates from the conventional iconography of nobles at Hatra. The identification of the statue as Nabu accords well with the fact that the shrine was dedicated to Nannai, the female companion of the god.

[82] 1) 1/H17, with H5: from Temple 1, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.174. 2) 2/H/60, with H30: from Temple 4. 3) 2/H/102, with H36: from Temple 5. 4) 2/H/103, with H37: from Temple 5. 5) 2/H/110, with H34: from Temple 5. 6) 2/H/111, with H35: from Temple 5. 7) unpublished statue from Temple 14. 8) unpublished statue with head missing from Temple 14. A life-size head of a woman from Temple 14 used to be on display in the National Museum at Baghdad. Possibly, this head originally belonged to the body under discussion. It has the usual high headdress covered with a veil that is adorned with necklaces. Noteworthy are the large temple pendants that are attached to these jewels. 9) 6/H/160, with H228: from the central temenos. 10) statue from the Temple of Allat, Salman (1974), pl.3B. 11) unpublished statue of unknown provenance of a seated woman, right hand raised, lowered left rests in her lap (HE-12). 12) unpublished statue of a standing woman, legs missing from the knees onward (IM188363). 13) unpublished statue of a woman who stands on a round base (HE-81/1).

[83] Similar headdresses are attested in paintings and graffiti from Dura-Europos (on the so-called Konon fresco from the Temple of Bel, see Cumont (1926), p.49-51, pl.XXXV-XXXVI; the Temple of Zeus Theos, see *Rep.* VII-VIII, pl.XXIV.1; several graffiti, see Rostovtzeff (1935), fig.19), mosaics and reliefs from Edessa (see Drijvers and Healey (1999), pl.9-10,12,48-51,54-5,63-4) and with many Babylonian terracotta figurines of reclining women (see Karvonen-Kannas (1995), p.60-1).

[84] This is most clear with the unpublished woman's head from Temple 14, that used to be on display in the National Museum at Baghdad (above, n.82, nº8). Such jewels are without parallel in Roman Syria, whereas they are common further east, notably in the golden hoard from Tillya-tepe in Bactria that is dated to the

is covered with a veil that drops down the back. Sometimes the robe has heavily patterned sleeves.[85] The degree of elaboration of the dress and the amount of jewellery reflects differences in status.[86]

Many statues of women are accompanied by an inscription and hence it is possible to identify different functions and social positions. First, we know of several statues of ordinary women. They wear plain dresses and unpretentious jewellery. The accompanying inscription to one of these states that the statue was erected after the death of the figure represented.[87] The statue is exceptional in that the figure is sitting.[88] The right hand is raised with the palm turned outward, as is conventional among Hatrene statues. In the left hand in her lap, the woman holds a spindle. This is an attribute that is common in funerary sculpture and mosaics, for example in Palmyra and Edessa.[89] From shrine 5 come two statues of women that belonged to Hatra's royal house. Their dress and hat are like that of ordinary women, but far more elaborately decorated.[90] Two unpublished statues from shrine 14 are very similar. Unfortunately, the social identity of these women is not yet known. All these women stand with their right hand raised, the palms turned outward. With their lowered left hands they hold up their upper garments.

At least one of the women can be identified from the accompanying inscription as a priestess.[91] Her clothes are plain and a sash of cloth is girdled around her waist. Unfortunately, her head is missing. Another statue found in the same temple wears exactly the same dress.[92] Although the inscription does not state that this woman is a priestess, her dress suggests this. She holds a *kithara* in her lowered

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first century AD: Sarianidi (1985). This author rightly pointed out the similarities between the jewellery and clothing of Tillya-tepe and Hatra: ibid., 21. In all likelihood, the resemblance is due to a mutual source of inspiration, possibly the fashion at the Arsacid court.

[85] As Homès-Fredericq (1963), p.27, pointed out, this particular kind of undergarment is unique for Hatra.

[86] Musche (1988), p.33.

[87] H30, on the statue of Abu, daughter of Gabilu, from Temple 4: 2/H/60. Cf. Homès-Fredericq (1963), nº27, pl.VI.4; Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.211.

[88] Hatra has yielded another statue of a sitting woman, so far unpublished, see above, n.78, nº11. Since there is no inscription and the find spot is unknown, it is impossible to say whether this statue has funerary connotations as well.

[89] Colledge (1976), p.70-1; Drijvers and Healey (1999), pl.51.

[90] See above, n.78, nºs3-4.

[91] See above, n.82, nº5, with H34.

[92] See above, n.82, nº6.

left hand, an instrument that is perhaps connected with her priestly function.[93] A smaller statue from shrine 1, of a woman clad in plain clothes, carries a tambourine.[94] Again, she is not identified as a priestess by the accompanying inscription, but her dress and instrument suggest that this was the case.

General Remarks on the Material

Apart from six statues near the city gates, all statues were found in sanctuaries. All statues of humans found near the gates are of kings and princes. By far the greatest number of life-size statues was found inside the central temenos: seventy-seven out of the one hundred and twenty statues. It has to be stressed though, that this high number may be deceptive, for quite a few statues were found in the temple court. It follows from the plan of find locations, published by Safar and Mustafa, that there are several instances where large quantities of statues were found together. Most of these are severely damaged. It could very well be the case that these are hoards that were buried in Antiquity. Inside the temples, however, quite a large number of statues were found more or less in situ. Of note is the large amount of royal sculptures that come from the central temenos. A few buildings in the central temenos were particularly rich in finds. Many statues of royalty were found in the so-called Square Temple. Although the exact nature of this building is mysterious, it was probably the most important centre of worship. The number of royal statues in the so-called 'Temple of the Triad' also seems exceedingly high. Unfortunately, material remains from this temple have scarcely been published. However, it follows from the inscriptions on statue bases that many statues of Hatrene rulers were in place here. King Sanatruq and his son figure prominently in the Temple of Allat, a temple that was built at their instigation. The inscriptions show that statues of high officials were also prominent in the central temenos.[95]

[93] On the lintel from the Temple of Allat, a female figure with a tambourine leads the way to the goddess on camel back.

[94] See above, n.82, nº1.

[95] All statues of individuals identified as *rbyt'* come from the central temenos: H381 and H364 (from the Temple of Allat), H361 (from the Triad Temple), H144 (found close to the separation wall of the temenos), H223-4 (from the facade of the northern iwan). H381 and H364 were found together with the statue.

Statues of women and priests are, on the other hand, rarely found here.

The fourteen minor sanctuaries outside the central temenos, too, yielded statues of people. In a number of instances, the original location of these statues can be traced. They were placed on brackets, about 2m from the ground, on either side of the cult niche and the entrance of the shrine. It is of note that the most important people occupied the most important positions, such as the brackets close to the cult niche. The small shrines also yielded statues of kings and other royal persons, but in far fewer numbers than did the central temenos.[96] In addition to the rulers, one finds statues of people associated with the shrines, such as priests and priestesses and ordinary men and women.

Honorary vs Votary

The material assembled above shows that life-size statues of people were a prominent feature in Hatra's visual culture. The question arises of why this was the case. In the present section, I set out to establish the function of these statues and the meaning attached to them by the inhabitants of, and visitors to, Hatra. In the past, several scholars have advocated the view that these were surrogate statues, which offered prayers for the dedicant or the person represented.[97] In contrast, both K. Dijkstra and J.-B. Yon have recently argued that the statues were primarily honorary statues that no longer had any religious significance.[98] They argued that dedicants and beneficiaries are simply presented in their social relationship to one another. Interesting in this respect is P. Veyne's theory, that originally every votive offering dedicated to a deity has a social and honorary aspect.[99] In due time, Veyne suggested, the religious aspect may become a mere formula or disappear altogether. What is left is an honorary statue. In the following discussion, I shall address the issue of whether the honorary aspect had indeed ousted the original function of the statues in Hatra, as Dijkstra and Yon

[96] See above, n.40, n^{os}17-8 (from Temple 3), n^{os}19-20 (from Temple 10) and n^{os}21-3 (from Temple 11). Two statues of royal women come from Temple 5.
[97] See above, n.3.
[98] Dijkstra (1995), p.219; Yon (2002), p.12.
[99] Veyne (1962), p.84-91.

argued, or whether the honorary and votary were still two sides of the same coin.

The social significance of the statues is apparent from the places where they were found. The distribution of different types of statues over the city mirrors its social and religious structure. The first thing that catches the eye when one looks at the distribution of the life-size statues, is the dichotomy between finds from the central temenos and the small shrines in the city proper. In the temenos we find the statues of kings and high officials, whereas in the smaller sanctuaries we find the statues of kings and people associated with the individual shrine. Interestingly, the same division existed on a religious level. The deities worshipped in the temenos (the triad Maren, Marten and Bar-Maren, the goddess Allat and several other deities) also occur in inscriptions and representations from the small shrines. In contrast, a number of deities that figure prominently in the texts and other finds from the small shrines do not appear in the central temenos.

The rulers of Hatra played a prominent role in the construction and cults of the central sanctuary.[100] The small shrines were apparently built and used by small social groups. Probably, many of these groups were based on kinship. An inscription from Temple 13, in which an iwan is built for the use of a specific family, is an illustrative example of the family-based organisation of the small shrines.[101] In view of Hatra's location in the desert, it is feasible that these groups partly consisted of desert-dwellers, and partly of those who had settled in the city.[102] The hypothesis suggests itself that the central temenos was the base for a set of centralized cults, supported by the royal house and important to the city as a whole, whereas the small shrines were frequented by social groups of a small scale.[103]

[100] On the priestly function of Hatra's kings, see above, n.14.

[101] H408. Of course, this does not imply that all cultic associations in Hatra were family-based. Familial and professional organisation may very well have co-existed side by side. A protective deity of a professional association is perhaps to be found in H58, found in front of the façade of Temple 8: according to the reading by Aggoula (1991), p.45, it mentions 'the *gad* of the fullers'. In Dura-Europos, a cultic organisation composed of individuals from different families from Anat on the Euphrates assembled in the Temple of Aphlad, see *Rep.* V, p.114, n°418. Cf. Dijkstra (1995), p.266. In the Syrian sanctuary at Delos, we know of a cult group that has a professional basis. Compare above, p.188 with n.38.

[102] For the tribal factor in Hatrene society and administration, see Dijkstra (1995), p.185-8.

[103] Also suggested by Kaizer (2000b), p.231.

The erection of the statues of royalty in the small shrines exemplifies the loyalty of these groups of settlers and nomads to the local rulers. The most telling example is the statue of King Sanatruq II found in Temple 9. The relevant inscription (H79) informs us that this statue was commissioned by two individuals, who represented members of a clan that lived both inside and outside the city, as a token of their allegiance to the Hatrene king and his son.[104]

Many statues in Hatra were erected by one person for another. Obviously, the dedicant had a certain objective in mind with his or her gift. It is, however, impossible to establish a single motif for the act, and thus ascribe a honorary character to all statues. As discussed above, the social relationship between the dedicant and the person represented varies significantly. In view of this variation, it is only logical that the social message expressed by these statues varies as well. At times it is clear that the dedicant or dedicants mean to express their loyalty towards the beneficiary. This seems to have been the case with the majordomos, who set up a statue of their king in the central temenos (H195 and H345), or with the statue of Sanatruq II from shrine 9 just mentioned (H79).

It is, however, not a rule that the person represented by the statue had a higher social standing than the individual who dedicated it. We know of several cases in which dedicant and beneficiary held the same office. Other statues were set up by husbands for their wives, or by sons for their mothers. Clearly, the objective of these statues was not primarily honorary. In at least one case we know for certain that the represented figure was deceased,[105] meaning that this statue was commemorative rather than honorary in nature.[106] Last but not least, a predominantly honorary character of Hatrene statues would be difficult to reconcile with statues that individuals erected to themselves.[107] A predominantly social interpretation of life-size

[104] Dijkstra (1990), p.81-98; Yon (2002), p.12.

[105] 2/H/60, with H30: from Temple 4, Safar and Mustafa (1974), fig.211.

[106] Another statue that was apparently commemorative is H83, since it uses the expression *dkrnh*, 'in memory of', thus Aggoula (1991) and Vattioni (1981), *ad loc.*

[107] See above, n.24. Many inscriptions do not say who erected the statue. It is plausible that in these cases the expenses for the statue were for the individual represented. Yon (2002), p.12, noted that the practice to limit the text to the name of the figure represented is limited in Palmyra to funerary inscriptions. He also stated that this was obviously not the case in Hatra. However, in my view a commemorative character is not unlikely for at least some Hatrene statues.

statues suggests that this was an act of self-aggrandizement. However, in the religious sphere, putting up one's own statue was common practice.

Hatra vs Palmyra

Although it is clear that there are social connotations to the life-size statues of mortals, it is more than doubtful whether they can be called honorary statues in the true sense of the word. It is even less likely that they had no religious significance. This can be demonstrated by comparing the statues from Hatra with statues from Palmyra. Hatra and Palmyra were both rich in life-size statues of individuals. At first glance, the cities were very similar.[108] This impression is, however, deceptive. Unlike in Hatra, the religious aspect of statues of humans had largely disappeared in Palmyra by the period in question.

In Palmyra, a veritable forest of honorific statues ornamented every public area. Most of these sculptures have vanished, since the majority were made of bronze rather than stone. We do, however, have some fragments, and hundreds of inscribed brackets referring to them. Many statues were placed on brackets which projected midway up the columns of the great colonnade and the agora. Apart from these obviously public places, we find them in the court of the Temple of Bel, the main temple of the city, and the temple of Baal-Shamin.[109] All these places, even the temple courts, are very much public areas. It is not unusual to set up statues of people in temple courts; we know of parallels in other Syrian cities such as Hierapolis (*De Dea Syria* 39) and in cities in the Greek world.[110] In fact, these are exactly the places where we expect to find statues with hon-

[108] Ibid.: "La coutume d'élever des statues honorifiques n'existe pas seulement à l'ouest de Palmyre. Il est tout à fait possible de comparer ce que se passe là à des faits de même ordre dans les limites de ce qui était l'Empire parthe à la même période. De ce point de vue, le spectacle qu'offrait le centre monumental de Hatra ne devait pas être très différent de celui de Palmyre."

[109] Colledge (1976), p.40 and p.90-2, fig.30,122. See also Krumeich (1998), p.188 with n.79, and p.191.

[110] In Niha in Lebanon, a relief of a figure of a priest, who can be identified as a historical figure, was set up at the stairs in front of the sanctuary. In Chehim in Lebanon, a life-size figure of a priest in relief adorned the wall next to the entrance of the naos: Krumeich (1998). See Veyne (1962), p.85-91, for many examples from the Greek world.

orific connotations, for publicity is an important part of the honour.[111] In Hatra, some statues stood in the open in the central temenos. By far the greatest number of Hatrene statues, however, was set up inside the temples, in the pronaos and the naos. These were not public places.[112] For this reason, a predominantly honorific meaning of the statues that were set up here is unlikely.

A second difference between Palmyrene and Hatrene statues can be found in the associated inscriptions. The honorary inscriptions in Greek and Aramaic from Palmyra are abbreviated forms of decrees by the senate and the people. They follow the formula that is commonly used in the Roman Near East. Most inscriptions tell us that the statues are erected by groups such as the council or a particular clan. They hint at the reason why the statue was erected. True, they are not very specific, but they do say something like 'because he pleased them', or 'because he helped them'. Most of the texts from Palmyra make explicit that the statue was erected to honour someone; in Greek it says τειμῆς χάριν, in Aramaic *lqyr*. In contrast to Palmyra, most statues in Hatra are set up by individuals. The inscriptions never amplify why the statue was erected. The formula *lqyr*, 'in honour of', never occurs. Instead, we occasionally find the expression *'l ḥyy*, 'for the life of'. Traditionally, this formula has a religious significance: it asks a deity to bless the beneficiary.

On closer inspection, the statues from Palmyra and Hatra turn out to be quite different. K. Dijkstra argued that these differences should not be exaggerated, and that the Hatrene statues were indeed honorific. He suggested that in Hatra the expression *'l ḥyy* had lost

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[111] Most telling is the situation in Palmyra, where the four tribes erected honorary statues of individuals in the courts of their sanctuaries. See *PAT* 2769 and 1063. These inscriptions say that other statues of these individuals were erected in the *kaisareion* and the Temple of Bel. This underscores the public character of the dedications in the four sanctuaries. A third inscription, *PAT* 1378, also commemorates the erection of statues by the four tribes, but these were probably set up in the agora. See Kaizer (2002a), p.44-8, for these three texts, and for references to further literature.

[112] In Ancient Babylonia, certain areas of the temples, notably the naos or cella where the cult image was standing, were not accessible to the public. A person who was allowed to enter these restricted areas was known as *erib biti*, 'temple enterer'. Anyone who held certain offices, or had to perform certain duties in the temples, owned an *erib bitutu* prebend, see Bongenaar (1997), p.146. This practice prevailed in the Hellenistic period, see Linssen (2004), p.17; as well as in Syrian temples during the Roman period: see *DDS* 31, with Lightfoot (2003), p.433, for commentary and parallels.

its religious meaning and had acquired honorific connotations. Dijkstra advanced two arguments to substantiate his hypothesis. He argued, first, that the statues had no cultic overtones in their subject matter and, second, that a divine recipient was structurally absent.

Religious Connotations in the Iconography of Hatrene statues

I shall first deal with the iconography, since it develops the comparison between the Hatrene and Palmyrene statues in fuller detail. Although the amount of extant statues from Palmyra is nothing compared to Hatra, a few complete and fragmentary pieces in limestone and bronze survive to give us some idea about their nature.[113] Apart from several statues of priests, neither clothing, nor pose, nor attributes of the surviving fragments have religious connotations.[114] In contrast, religious elements are prominent in Hatrene statues. As in Palmyra, priests are represented in their priestly garment, but in Hatra they frequently reach out for the incense they hold in their hand; hence Hatrene priests are literally represented in function. The pose and attributes of other figures have religious implications as well.

The most common pose among life-size statues is that of the raised right hand with the palm turned outwards. This is an old Near Eastern gesture that is found with gods and humans. It was widespread in the Hellenistic, Roman and Parthian worlds.[115] The gesture is open to several interpretations, depending on the context in which it occurs. In a cultic context it undoubtedly had apotropaic connotations; when performed by gods, it symbolized guardianship and benediction; it signified worship or prayer, finally, when performed by mortals.[116] In Sumerian texts the saying *ka-shu-gal*, 'to bring the hand to the mouth', expresses prayer, as does the expression *shu-zi or shu-il-lakk*, 'raise the hand'.[117] About 2000 years later, a tablet dated to the year 61 of the Seleucid era (270 BC) prescribes that

[113] Colledge (1976), p.89-93; Tanabe (1986), pl.166-72.

[114] Colledge mentioned one torso of a woman with hand raised, palm turned outward.

[115] In Hatra, this pose is most frequent with representations of humans. In Palmyra, the gesture is attested for mortals only in a funerary context. See Parlasca (1980), p.150-1, n.17-21, for instances from funerary art at Palmyra.

[116] Colledge (1976), p.138.

[117] *RA* III (1971), p.156ff.

priests recite an incantation for Anu with their hand raised.[118] It is true that the gesture hardly ever occurred in free-standing statues in early periods. The famous statues of worshipper from Tell Asmar in Iraq (ca 2700 BC) and the statues from Mari in Syria (ca 2500 BC) have their arms folded.[119] This is probably because it is a very complicated gesture for free-standing statues made of stone. This would explain the fact that we do encounter the pose only on votive reliefs, seal impressions and bronze statuettes.[120]

In Hatra, the raised hand is a cultic gesture that probably expressed prayer. The most striking parallels are contemporary representations from Dura-Europos and Assur. In Assur, several stelae in relief representing worshippers were found at the southern gate of the temenos of the former sanctuary of Assur.[121] The accompanying inscription dates one of the stelae to AD 13. Both inscription and image are very close to the Hatrene custom. As in Hatra, the text identifies the represented figure, which was erected by a different individual, for his life and that of his sons. The figure has his right hand raised and holds a palm branch in his lowered left hand.[122] In Dura-Europos, on the Euphrates, we encounter the gesture in two small worshippers in attendance at an incense offering, represented on a relief from the mithraeum dated to AD 170-1.[123] The so-called Konon-fresco, probably dating from the late first century AD, represents various members of Konon's family and several priests on the side wall of the naos of the Temple of Bel or the Temple of the Palmyrene gods.[124] As in Hatra, the priests on the fresco are in the act of performing a sacrifice. The attendants have their right hands raised, with the palms turned outward. They hold a twig in their lowered left hands.

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[118] Thureau-Dangin (1923), p.110, referred to by Cumont (1926), p.70, n.4.

[119] Moortgat (1969), fig.59-62,74-80.

[120] Various examples of metal figurines can be found in Spycket (1981), p.248, nº117, pl.171; p.309-11; p.343, nº233, pl.225; p.427, nº350, pl. 277. Votive tablet of Gudea from Telloh, see Moortgat (1967), fig.185. For the pose on seals, see ibid., pl.G.1;N.1.

[121] Andrae (1938), fig.230 (frontal) and fig.231-2 (in profile).

[122] For the inscription, see Dijkstra (1995), p.250-1. For the figure in relief, see Mathiesen (1992) II, p.190, nº159.

[123] Downey (1977), p.25-9, nº8, pl.IV; Dirven (1999), p.269-72, pl.IX.

[124] Breasted (1924), p.59 and p.75-90; Cumont (1926), p.41-52, pl.XXXII-XXXVI. Cf. Dirven (2004), p.11, pl.3.

Most of the statues from Hatra that have their right hand raised carry an object in their left hand. By far the majority of the statues carry a palm branch. In Hatra, as elsewhere in the Roman and Parthian Near East, the palm branch is an object with religious connotations, carried by gods as well as mortals.[125] Its cultic significance with worshippers is clear from the above-cited instances from Assur and Dura-Europos.[126] A festival in which date palm branches played an important part was still celebrated in Babylon in the Hellenistic period.[127] The carrying of branches during religious festivals has a long tradition in the Ancient Near East and is well known from representations.[128] It is perhaps not without significance that the palm branch precluded the long sword. This suggests that weapons were prohibited during sacrifice.

Besides palm branches, life-size statues may carry poles with objects attached, musical instruments, and statuettes of deities. The pole is known from Hatrene inscriptions as *smy'* (plural *smyt'*), which is probably identical with the *semeion*, the cultic standard from Hierapolis in northern Syria that is described in *De Dea Syria* (33), dated to the second century AD.[129] Inscriptions and representations from Hatra prove that such poles were the object of a cult.[130] Some of the female statues carry musical instruments. One of them can be identified as a priestess. In all likelihood, the instruments were used in the cult. We know from *De Dea Syria* (50) that Atargatis' galli played

[125] Krumeich (1998), p.176-87, for Near Eastern parallels dated to the first centuries AD. Note that outside Hatra the palm branch was frequently carried by priests, whereas at Hatra it was the attribute of worshippers.

[126] People attending sacrifices frequently carried the palm branch. This is confirmed by an altar from Hatra that has the palm sculptured on its sides, as well as by a famous drawing of a cultic scene on a *pithos* from the Parthian period from Assur. Between the two cult images stands a small figure with outstretched arms, who is holding branches above two libation (?) altars, see Milik (1972), p.345.

[127] Linssen (2004), p.118.

[128] For the written sources, see Çağirgan and Lambert (1991-3), p.92-3. For the iconography, see Braun-Holzinger (1991), p.103.

[129] See Lightfoot (2003), p.271, and appendix II, p.540-547. On the standard in Hatra, see Downey (1970), p.195-225, and Dirven (2005a).

[130] The city yielded sixteen inscriptions in the Aramaic script that mention a *smy'* (plural *smyt'*): H3, H52, H56, H65 (AD 187), H74-5, H79, H82 (AD 176-7), H151, H200-1, H209, H213, H235, H280, H338 (AD 133). In several cases text and image occur together. *Semeia* are frequently represented standing next to a divine figure or animal.

musical instruments.[131] As late as the early fifth century AD, Isaac of Antioch wrote that Baal-Shamin was worshipped at Edessa with tambourines and horns.[132] Only statues of kings carry statuettes. Most frequently the kings carry a figurine of a clean-shaven deity clad in a knee-length tunic who holds a sceptre in his right hand. This iconography is typical of the god Bar-Maren, the third member of the Hatrene triad.[133] In one instance, a king carries a statue of an eagle adorned with numerous necklaces. In Hatra, the eagle was closely associated with Maren, the lord of the Hatrene pantheon. The fact that the rulers of Hatra carry statues of Hatra's most important deities accords well with their prominent role in the city-temple, where Hatra's main deities were housed. The exact meaning of the motif is more difficult to establish, for I know of no contemporary parallels from Syria or Mesopotamia, nor from earlier periods in the region.[134]

It follows from their pose and attributes that the statues from Hatra have cultic overtones. This is in total accord with their placement in temples, in the proximity of the cult image. Consequently, Dijkstra's first argument in favour of the secular interpretation of the formula *'l ḥyy* may be rejected.

A Habit of Dedication

The second argument adduced in favour of a secular meaning of life-size statues at Hatra is the absence of a divine recipient in the inscriptions. In order to see whether this indeed points to a secular meaning, we have to look at the convention of dedication in Hatra. Apart from statues, we possess dedications of major object such as parts of temples, and minor dedications of stelae and small statues. The major dedications normally specify to whom a building, or part

[131] See Lightfoot (2003), p.507, with references.

[132] Isaac Antiochenus I, 209 (ed. Bickel).

[133] This follows from the only representation of Bar-Maren that is identified as such by the accompanying inscription, a badly weathered stele that was found in the proximity of the North Gate, see al-Salihi (1975), p.79, fig.6-7.

[134] Closest are worshippers that bring offerings to the deity. However, all instances known to me are of sacrificial animals, not of statues. Cuneiform texts inform us that the kings from Isin, Larsa and Babylon dated their reign by referring to the statue of a king or deity that they erected. Unfortunately, we have no proof that they represented themselves carrying the statues of these gods.

of a building, is consecrated. In contrast, a divine recipient is seldom mentioned in the minor dedications. In fact, I know of only one dedication that uses the appropriate formula. The others do not mention a divine recipient, confining themselves instead to the name of the dedicant. Most objects do not have an inscription at all. Their subject matter and provenance leave no doubt, however, as to their religious nature.

The absence of a dedicatory inscription, or the omission of a divine recipient in the dedication, is by no means confined to Hatra, but is rather common. However, in compiling a catalogue of votive offerings, dedications tend to be used as a criterion for selection. Such is the case for E. Braun-Holzinger's compilation of Mesopotamian votive gifts dated to the early dynastic and Old Babylonian periods. However, she rightly pointed out that many statues of worshippers, without dedicatory inscription but found inside temples, were very probably also votive gifts.

In view of this, the absence of a divine recipient is insufficient proof for a secular meaning of statues in Hatra. The dedication to a god may very well have been understood, since the images were put up in temples dedicated to particular deities.[135] True, written evidence to this effect is lacking. There is, however, a votive relief that illustrates this point of view. In shrine 5 a relief was found that represents the goddess Allat standing on a lion. She is flanked by two female figures, standing on tiny brackets. These women stand with their right hands raised, palms turned outward, exactly like the life-size statues of female worshippers. In fact, the relief pictures the situation in the shrine where it was found, where statues placed on brackets flanked the cult niche with the statue of the deity.

Worshippers, Statues and Surrogates

For our modern western minds it is difficult to understand that the gift of a statue of a human being can be so pleasing to the divine recipient that the god would bless the individual represented and the other beneficiaries. In the following section, I shall try to explain this custom, by interpreting the statues in Hatra in a millennia-old Near

[135] Note that with respect to the stelae from Assur, Dijkstra (1995), p.250-1, did assume a religious meaning from their find spot.

Eastern custom of placing surrogate statues in temples to offer prayers for the dedicant.[136] So-called 'Beterstatuen' are attested in temples from early dynastic times onwards,[137] and the tradition was still alive in neo-Assyrian times.[138] Although there is hardly any material for the Hellenistic period, written evidence suggests that special powers were still attributed to statues of human beings placed in temples.[139] It is my contention that these beliefs still prevailed in Parthian Hatra. Earlier written sources should, of course, be used with great caution in explaining religious practices from later periods. If, however, continuity can be shown in outward appearance, as well as in practice, one may reasonably suppose that the meaning of the object also continued to resemble the earlier meaning.

The practice to set up statues of worshippers in temples can be traced back to the third millennium BC, and is attested, for example, in Tell Asmar. It continued into the second and first millenia. A great number of statues of worshippers were, for example, found in Mari. It follows from the texts inscribed on some of them, that the erection of statues was a fairly democratic affair, open to all. For the end of the early dynastic period, finds of stone statues diminish drastically. This does not mean that they were no longer erected. Inscriptions show that most statues were now made of precious metal rather than stone. Statues of ordinary people were probably increasingly made of terracotta. Over time, people were represented in different poses with different attributes. In the early dynastic period, people were represented with their hands folded. Frequently, they held a cup or a leaf. Sometimes we also encounter an individual who carries a sacrificial animal. In metal statuettes dated to a subsequent period, one also encounters the raised hand that symbolised prayer.[140]

Not all statues had an inscription, but those inscriptions that did accompany statues invariably mention the person who is represented. Subsequently, the name of the dedicant and/or the name of the person for whose life the statue was erected may follow. Several instances

[136] This suggestion was already made by Downey (1982), p.584.
[137] Material assembled by Braun-Holzinger (1991), p.219-333.
[138] Strommenger (1970), p.16.
[139] In the Hellenistic period, offerings were brought before the statues of living kings in Uruk, see Linssen (2004), p.125-8. When the statue of a Hellenistic king fell, this was considered a bad omen.
[140] See above, n.120.

also mention the name of the deity to whom the statue was dedicated. Apart from the finds from the Ninni-Zaza Tempel in Mari, the name of the deity is frequently missing.[141] This is similar to the absence of a divine recipient in the inscriptions from Hatra. Apparently, the placement of the statues in temples dedicated to particular gods made it obvious to which deity the statue was dedicated. In the early dynastic period, we know of several people who set up a statue of themselves for their own life and the lives of their family members.[142] This practice, which is reminiscent of some of the statues that were found in Hatra, is religiously motivated and cannot be interpreted as self-aggrandizement.[143] In the Akkadian period, it became popular to dedicate the statue to the life of the ruler. As in Hatra, this dedication for the life of the ruler was frequently offered by high officials.[144] As far as one can tell from the material evidence, the majority of the statues represented the dedicant himself, and not his king.[145] An exception is the statue of king Manishtusu from Susa, which was dedicated by his servant to the goddess Naruti.[146]

In Ancient Mesopotamia, most statues of praying figures represented the dedicant. Several instances are known from ancient times in which the dedicant and the represented person were not the same. In most of these cases, someone dedicated the statue for his own life and not for the life of the person represented. In all cases known to me, this was because the person represented was no longer alive. All surviving examples are statues of royalty that were erected by their successors.[147] Whether it was customary among ordinary people to erect statues of their ancestors for their own lives is not known.

Admittedly, instances where the dedicant did not coincide with the person represented were rare in Ancient Mesopotamia, whereas

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[141] Braun-Holzinger (1991), p.226.
[142] Ibid., n^{os}67,78.
[143] Instances listed at ibid.
[144] Ibid., p.225.
[145] To dedicate a statue of oneself for the life of the ruler is common. Such is the case, e.g., with several statues of princesses from Lagash, dated to the neo-Sumerian period. See Spycket (1981), p.198ff, and Braun-Holzinger (1991), n^{os}132-3. Most of these statues were erected for the life of the ruler, and not for the life of the dedicant who was represented by the statue. For exceptions, dedicated for the lives of both, see ibid., n^{os}133,140.
[146] Ibid., p.257-8, n^{o}95.
[147] Instances are listed at ibid., p.229-30.

this was quite common in Hatra.[148] So far, I have been unable to find a satisfactory explanation for this shift in the convention of dedication. One instance is known from Hatra in which it can be demonstrated that the represented person was no longer alive.[149] Al-though this may explain several instances, it is unlikely to explain all. Possibly, the change was due to the fact that the social and honorary aspects of these statues had become more important over time. The initial impetus to this shift can already be seen in a much earlier period, with kings commissioning statues of their ancestors, and high officials dedicating statues for the life of their rulers. However, these parallels make it abundantly clear that the shift did not undo the religious meaning of the dedication.

In Hatra, the archaeological evidence suggests that the location of statues was important. The statues of the most important individuals occupied the most prominent places in the sanctuary, i.e. in the proximity of the naos where the cult image stood. This recalls the early Christian and medieval desire to burry people as close as possible to the remains of holy men and women.[150] As with the statues in Hatra, the graves around the saint's relics map out, in terms of proximity to the saint, the balance of social power within the Christian community. The desire to be close to the saint was not, however, based exclusively on the wish to acquire social status. At the root is the belief in the saint's powers. We may assume that a similar situation prevailed at Hatra. This hypothesis is substantiated by texts from Mesopotamia that date back to much earlier periods.

Unlike in Hatra, archaeological evidence for the placement of statues is sparse for previous periods. Few statues were found in situ.[151]

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[148] See above, p.39.

[149] H30. Another instance, though not of a free-standing statue, is a stele representing a banqueting figure that was found in Temple 13: al-Salihi (1990), p.33, fig.24 with H412. I argued in a previous publication that this stele was in all probability erected by the son of the deceased man who is represented in the relief: Dirven (2005b), p.74-75, fig.2. Votive statues of deceased people are also attested for the Greek world. Cf. Veyne (1962), p.88.

[150] Brown (1981), p.34.

[151] Most votive statues were not found in situ, because they were taken from the cella and buried at periods of rebuilding. See the find spots of the material assembled by Braun-Holzinger (1991), p.291-302. Of note is the hoard from the cella of the sixth Nintu temple in Tell Asmar, where a hoard of ten statues was found, buried in front of the altar. Particularly rich in statues was the Ishtar temple in Mari, see

There are, however, texts that inform us about such matters. A text from Mari speaks of the placement of the statue of king Sinkasid in front of the statue of the god Amurru.[152] In a hymn composed for Shulgi of Ur, we are told that the king's image, 'made brilliant like the heavenly stars', was set up 'before the good eyes of Enlil of Nippur.[153] In the first millennium, the Assyrian ruler Assurnasirpal II states that he created his royal image with a likeness of his own countenance and placed it before the god Ninurta.[154] Texts describing some royal images of the Isin-Larsa period (early second millenium) state that they were intended for the temple courtyard.[155] One text explicitly describes the king as holding a goat for sacrifice.[156] This placement makes sense, since animal sacrifice was conducted in the court. Curse formulae on statues that claim perpetuity show that the placement of a statue was considered to be of great importance.[157]

Most dedicatory inscriptions of early statues are not very explicit about their function. Like all gifts to the gods, they aimed to please the god and to put the dedicant and his family under the protection of the deity. Specific to votary statues of individuals, however, was the belief that they literally substituted for the individual represented by the statue. These so-called 'Beterstatuen' were deemed to be living manifestations, empowered to pray on the dedicant's behalf.[158] The most explicit evidence to this effect comes from texts dated to ca 2100 BC, that are written upon the images of Gudea of Lagash and his son and successor, Ur-Ningirsu.[159] The most complete text is inscribed on the so-called 'Gudea B', a seated statue of the ruler of Lagash. The text informs us that the image is to be set up in a shrine intended for libations (*ki-a-nag*) of the temple of Ningirsu. In

ibid., p.295. A statuette of Shulgi, king of Ur, dated to the neo-Sumerian period, was found in situ in a sanctuary in Ur, dedicated to Nannai, see Spycket (1981), p.61.

[152] Charpin and Dunant (1993), p.372 = A.975 (ARMT XXVI/3).

[153] Klein (1991), p.308.

[154] Grayson (1976), p.679.

[155] Frayne (1990), p.67 and p.86.

[156] Ibid., p.67, vi.8.

[157] Winter (1990), p.38 n.19, cited several examples. In Nippur, at the end of third millennium, a ruler of Larsa instructed any future king not to displace his statue from its dedicatory location, nor to place it in a storehouse, and certainly not to put his own statue in that place. See Frayne (1990), Sin-iqisham 1. A text of Amar-sin, of the third-dynasty of Ur, curses any man who displaces the image or tears out its socle. See Steible (1991), Amarsu'en 3.

[158] Braun-Holzinger (1991), p.221 and p.228.

[159] Winter (1990), p.13-42.

the text, Gudea orders the image to speak to his lord, the god Ningursi, on his behalf (7.21-5). Subsequently, he enumerates his pious deeds. At the end of the recitation we are told that Gudea installed the image in order that it should recite his words (7.47-8). Although the text of Gudea constitutes the most explicit evidence for the mediative role of the statue, the same belief is attested for the old-Babylonian period. A ruler of Larsa, for example, implored that a votive image may be a living thing in the temple.[160] Abisare, king of Ur, asked his statue in the temple of Nannai to report good things of him to the god daily.[161] Siniddinam dedicated a silver statue of his father Nuradad, king of Larsa, for his (Siniddinam's) life. The image is to speak to the god and tell him of the great deeds of the father.[162]

Conclusion

We may conclude from the placement and the iconography of the life-size statues from Hatra that they were religious in nature. Although a divine recipient was not explicitly mentioned, it was probably understood, since the statues were erected in the proximity of the cult image, and because their iconography had strong cultic overtones. The fact that many of these statues were erected by one individual for another certainly had social implications, and was meant to honour the person represented. However, from this it does not follow that they were identical to secular honorary statues, such as, for example, the statues from Palmyra. The placement, dedicatory inscription and iconography of the Hatrene statues differ considerably from their Palmyrene counterparts. We may therefore conclude that the formula *'l ḥyy* is not to be understood as an equivalent of Palmyrenean *lyqr*, 'in honour of'. Rather, it was used in its traditional, religious sense; i.e. as an evocation of a divine recipient to bestow life upon one or more beneficiaries. As such, the formula is one of the few indications in the inscriptions that points to the predominantly religious nature of life-size statues of kings and nobles from Hatra. Statues in Hatra are still primarily votive offerings with a religious connotation.

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[160] Frayne (1990), p.195.3-4.
[161] Kärki (1980), p.42; 2.22-29.
[162] Ibid., p.68-73.

EPHRAEM SYRUS AND THE SOLAR CULT

JÜRGEN TUBACH

Introduction

Ephraem Syrus (ca AD 307-73), one of the most famous Syrian theologians, spent most of his life in Nisibis, south of the Tur 'Abdin, where he was born. After the failure of Julian's campaign against the Sasanian, neo-Persian King Shapur II (AD 309-79), his successor Jovian (AD 363-4) lost the border town Nisibis. On the twenty-sixth day of June, Julian was seriously wounded at a place called Phrygia near the Tigris and died at midnight.[1] The army had left the Persian capital Ctesiphon and marched to the north, along the river, in order to join the smaller army under the command of Julian's cousin Procopius. When Julian died at midnight of the same day, Jovian, a Christian officer, became the new emperor. He made peace with Shapur, and ceded five smaller regions east of the Tigris and the fortified cities Singara and Nisibis to him.[2] Most of the inhabitants of both cities had to emigrate to the Roman side of the frontier. Many Christians from Nisibis went to Edessa, including Ephraem. When the Roman legionaries passed Nisibis, the people could take leave of the dead emperor before the walls of the city. Ephraem remembers this event in his mēmrā (poem) *Contra Julianos*. He was glad that the emperor was dead. Many Christians in the East were afraid of new persecutions, because the emperor, commonly called 'the Apostate' (in Syriac *rašš̄ā*, 'blasphemer'), dreamed of a renewal of the empire under the patronage of 'king Helios'. Ephraem was astonished that Julian, as an adherent to the sun god, had attempted to conquer the Sasanian empire, where the same god had been revered for a long time, especially by the Chaldaeans in Babylonia. Julian was—as Ephraem stresses—proud of the 'error' he made, but the Chaldaeans could be even more proud, because they had come to this ven-

[1] Bidez (1930), p.328-9; Browning (1975), p.212-3.

[2] Sturm (1936), p.748-50; Winter and Dignas (2001), p.155-60; Schippmann (1990), p.35f; Frye (1984), p.311; Turcan (1966).

eration many generations before. In Ephraem's eyes, Julian's campaign against these old sun worshippers was hybris and insolence, and could only result in a fiasco.

Like some other Syrian theologians, Ephraem was convinced that paganism was an invention of the devil, but also that, since the coming of Christ, the realm of Satan had gradually become weaker and weaker. Nevertheless, he still had many faithful adherents: Satan, for example, loved the Egyptians more than any other people, because they were even convinced that garlic and onions were gods. However, Ephraem's interest in pagan cults as practised by his contemporaries is limited. He only mentions a few deities venerated by the inhabitants of Edessa and Nisibis. He knew some gods and goddesses from Greek mythology, and it may be that he had heard some stories about Aphrodite, because he speaks of her as the 'adulterous goddess'. Popular figures were the goddess Kaukaḇtā, 'little star' (called Astlik in Armenia), and the Gaddē, personifications of good fortune. Kaukaḇtā, sometimes called Baṯ-Nikkal, is none other than the Mesopotamian or Babylonian counterpart of Aphrodite, the goddess Ishtar, the daughter of Sin and Ningal (> Aram. Nikkal). In his hymns *Contra Haereses* and in his prose refutations, Ephraem does not deal with pagan cults. Idol worship is an anachronistic feature for him, refuted by the Old Testament. His main arguments against paganism are taken from two *loci classici* of the Bible, namely *Isaiah* 44 and *Psalm* 115:4-8 (=135:15-18).[3]

Only foolish persons confuse the creator with created things, like idols or the stars. The most dangerous opponents were Gnostic or semi-Gnostic circles, with their mixture of biblical and non-biblical teachings, which did not fit into the beliefs of the Christian majority in the fourth century. The so-called orthodoxy, exponents of the mainstream of Christianity, had emerged out of heresy in Edessa. What were the Christians par excellence in Edessa had, originally, been the adherents of Bardaisan (AD 154-222). Mani (AD 216-77), the 'apostle of Jesus Christ',[4] who wrote letters to the Edessenes, claimed to have found the true interpretation of the New Testament. The same opinion was held by the followers of Marcion and by those of Valentine. Both had communities either in Edessa or in northern

[3] Cf. Preuß (1971).
[4] Cf. Koenen-Römer (1988), 66.4f (= p.44-5).

Mesopotamia. If these Christian groups wanted to enhance their membership, they had the choice to convert either pagans, Jews or Christians belonging to other communities. Publicity and propaganda among the adherents to the traditional polytheistic cults of Edessa, or among the Jews, was not easy. But missionary work among other Christian groups was not connected with any difficulties, nor did it run into serious obstacles. For this reason, Ephraem fights against the Manichaeans[5] and against the followers of Marcion,[6] Bardaisan and Valentine and their doctrines. In reality, his polemics and attacks are a defence of the beliefs of the group to which he himself belonged, some sort of mental protection for the members of the orthodox communities, to help in their discussions with the 'heretics'.

Ephraem vs Astrology

Aside from these other forms of Christianity—the different Gnostic interpretations and Marcion's approach to the New Testament—Ephraem detected another enemy, an adversary who could easily make a symbiosis with every religious or philosophical system. For Ephraem, however, this was neither symbiosis nor enrichment, but a dangerous infiltration and poisoning of the truth. This devil in disguise was astrology, which was perceived by many of Ephraem's contemporaries to be a science that could reveal the dark future as it was written in the sky. Ephraem's refutation of horoscope astrology was intended for church members, who knew their biblical stories very well. All his arguments against astrology are taken directly from the Bible. Ephraem knew the basic principles of casting a horoscope: the seven planets had, of course, no equal power. The most powerful among the planets was the sun, as Ephraem stresses in one of his hymns *Contra Haereses* (4.7): *wak̲ dāmrīn šemšā haw dmen kullhōn ʿazzīz*, 'as they say, the sun is the one that is stronger than all the other stars'.[7]

The sun cult was not only confined to the neo-Persians, but generally practised in the time of Ephraem. In his hymns on faith (*De*

[5] Cf. Beck (1978); Mitchell (1912-21) II, p.190-228 and p.xci-cviii.
[6] Cf, ibid., II, p.50-142 and p.xxiii-lxv.
[7] Beck (1957), p.15 (text); p.16 translation).

Fide 37.15), he states that the veneration of the 'great sun' (*šemšā rabbā*) had superseded the moon cult.[8] His literary works contain polemics against the worship of the stars, including the sun. According to *Genesis* 1, sun and moon are lamps which distinguish between day and night in the cosmos. In any case, both are created things, and no gods themselves. However, this does not prevent Ephraem from making extensive use of the symbolism of light, especially the sun. The 'true sun' is either Christ, or God himself. In short, the veneration of the visible sun is foolish and silly, because the sun is a created being, unlike the intelligible sun god himself—that is the sun which can be apprehended by the intellect, not by the senses, and which is enthroned in the transcendence beyond the sphere of the fixed stars.

The 'sun of righteousness' (šemšā ḏzaddīqūṯā)—*sol iustitiae*

Maleachi, the last book of the *Dodekapropheton*, ends with the hope that the 'sun of righteousness' will come (4:2/LXX: 3:20). Ephraem identifies this 'sun' with Christ, and declares that the visible sun fell in deep mourning and became dark when she saw that her Lord, the 'sun of righteousness', was crucified at Golgatha. The eclipse of the sun, which, according to the Synoptic gospels,[9] took place during the crucifixion, is used by Ephraem for a surprising explanation: the sun is regarded as a figure with feelings similar to those of human beings. Ephraem is not the only theologian, who liked to use Maleachi's 'sun of righteousness'. In the fourth and fifth centuries, we can find many examples for this expression in the Greek East and the Latin West.[10] It was adopted by the Copts[11] and the Armenians[12], where Maleachi's technical term is quoted in hymns sung in the liturgy.

[8] Beck (1955), p.123 (text); p.101 (translation).
[9] MacAdam (1999).
[10] Dölger (1925) and (1971).
[11] Awad (2004), p.132.
[12] Drost-Abgarjan (2003), p.24f.35.37f.76.78.140-1.166.175.251-4.256-7.260f. 262.274.323.

*'Our sun (*šemšan*); the 'new sun'* (šemšā ḥattā)*—sol novus*

Astral religion lost its value with the appearance of Christ, 'our sun' (*De Virginitate* 9.1; 52.3.7[13]; *De Nativitate* 18.9[14]) or 'our light', *nuhran* (*De Virginitate* 51.2.9[15]) who shines much brighter than the earthly sun. The visible light is only a weak reflection of the transcendental 'new sun' (*De Nativitate* 24.12[16]), *sol novus* in the western parts of the Roman empire.[17]

The 'great sun' (šemšā rabbā)

In one passage of his sermons (3,87ff[18]), Ephraem requests the sun to thank the heavenly 'great sun' for illuminating the whole cosmos. Like the Greek god Helios, Christ is a *panoptes*[19]: nothing can be kept in secret before him, he sees all.

The 'sun of mercy' (šemšā ḏraḥmē)

In his hymn on the suffering and death of Christ (*De Crucifixione* 7.10[20]), Ephraem uses the expression 'sun of mercy'.

The 'true sun' (šemšā ḏquštā)*—sol verus*

Sometimes Ephraem calls Christ the 'true sun', *šemšā ḏquštā* (*De Fide* 13.4[21])—whose Latin equivalent is *sol verus*[22]—or the 'true light', *nuhrā ḏquštā* (*De Virginitate* 51.7.9[23]). The latter designation is of biblical origin. It occurs in the prologue of the Gospel of John (1:9). 'Light' and 'sun' can be used as synonyms. The meaning is always that the 'true light' or 'true sun', giving divine illumination, is not

[13] Beck (1962), p.31, p.166 and p.168 (text); p.32 and p.146-7 (translation).
[14] Id. (1959), p.92 (text); p.84 (translation).
[15] Id. (1962), p.162 and p.164 (text); p.142 and p.144 (translation).
[16] Id. (1959), p.124 (text); p.113 (translation).
[17] Wallraff (2001), p.184 and p.187. For *sol novus* as designation of the emperor, see Lane Fox (1986), p.82.
[18] Beck (1970), p.57 (text); p.74 (translation).
[19] Jessen (1912), p.58f and p.84f; Dölger (1918), p.97 and p.107.
[20] Beck (1964), p.71 (text); p.57 (translation).
[21] Id. (1955), p.60 (text); p.45 (translation).
[22] Dölger (1940a).
[23] Beck (1962), p.164f (text); p.144 (translation).

identical with the celestial body which appears on the horizon every morning.[24]

The intelligible sun

In his hymns on the church (*De Ecclesia* 9.17[25]) Ephraem mentions the 'visible unvisible sun', *šemšā kasyā wgālyā*, the literal translation of which is 'the hidden and at the same time manifest sun'. Everyone should love the revealed or manifest light of this sun, but also fear her hidden strength.

The Sun as a Symbol for Christ

In some passages, Ephraem compares the yearly course of the sun with Christ's life. His birth took place on the day of Epiphany, the sixth day of the month Kānūn (*De Nativitate* 27.3[26], cf. 5.14), a tradition, which was adopted by the Armenian church. Ephraem knew, of course, that the winter solstice, the lowest level of the orbit of the sun, did not correspond to the day of Epiphany. He found an ingenious explanation for the discrepancy. In general, the date for the winter solstice is located in antique calendars or astrological traditions on the twenty-fifth day of December.[27] This date neglects the precession of the equinoxes shifting backwards. Already at the time of Ephraem, the true winter solstice was a little earlier. But this does not matter. For Ephraem and his contemporaries (except the astronomers), the winter solstice took place on the twenty-fifth day of December. The difference between the winter solstice and Epiphany are twelve days, according to Ephraem a symbol for the twelve disciples of Christ, or, including the thirteenth day, the birthday of Christ, 'a perfect symbol of the son and his twelve' (*De Nativitate* 5.13[28]).

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[24] For parallels from the West, see Miziolek (1991); Wallraff (2001).

[25] Beck (1960), p.26 (text); p.28 (translation). Beck's complement of the text corresponds to Ephraem's theology. The solar epithets for Christ are often formulated in antitheses.

[26] Id. (1959), p.137 (text); p.125 (translation).

[27] Cf. Boll (1910), p.16, and also p.33 and p.38; Cumont (1911); Herz (1975), p.311f.

[28] Beck (1959), p.48 (text); p.41 (translation).

The fact that the days become shorter and shorter in winter, could be interpreted in Late Antiquity as a humiliation of the light or sun. When the light was strengthened again, the days became longer and the light overcame darkness. Ephraem puts this in parallel to the incarnation of Christ: the course of the sun proclaims the mystery of the son of God. It is a symbol for his life and his work. The darkness was defeated by light. Ephraem can summarize it with the following words: 'Satan was defeated like the winter', *ḥāḇ Sāṭānā ḇaḏmūṯ saṯwā* (*De Fide* 74.25[29]).

The relation of the first and the second person of the Trinity to the sunlight

In his hymns on faith (*De Fide* 40.73-75[30]), Ephraem stresses that the father and the son are not separated. According to the decision of the Council of Nicea in AD 325, the son was not subordinated to his father, but both were of the same substance (*homoousios*). Ephraem compares the father and the son with the symbols of light and sun. Christ can be called 'child of that sun', i.e. of god (*De Fide* 65.10[31]). Against this background, Mary is named 'bride of the light' in one of the sermons (*Sermo* 1.774[32]).

The sun as a symbol for the Trinity

Ephraem compares the Trinity with sun, light and warmth (especially in *De Fide* 73.12,15,17,19[33]). All of these form an inseparable unity (see *De Fide* 40.1-5; 73.1-11; 74.1-5; 75.1-12[34]). Although the sun is far away, her light and warmth can be felt on earth. The rays of the sun, the light and the warmth do not exist without the sun. They can not be isolated or separated. The rays of the fatherly sun came into Mary and took a human nature. The warmth, which Christ left in his believers, is compared with the Holy Ghost. But Ephraem does not intend to solve the mystery of the Trinity. Several times he emphasizes that it is impossible for human beings to penetrate the divine mysteries.

[29] Id. (1955), p.228 (text); p.196 (translation).
[30] Ibid., p.130-3 and p.223-32 (text); p.107-9 and p.192-8 (translation).
[31] Ibid., p.203 (text); p.177 (translation).
[32] Id. (1975).
[33] Id. (1955).
[34] Ibid. See also id. (1949), p.43; id. (1981), p.24-116; Dölger (1929) and (1940b).

The Reasons for the Choice of the Sun as s Symbol

Ephraem's spiritual world was the Bible. He was very well acquainted with the Old and New Testament. Sometimes he shows himself aware of pseudepigraphical traditions, but this is rare. However, his extensive use of solar symbolism can not be explained by biblical or apocryphal material. In the Old Testament, God is not identified with the sun or with the sun god.[35] And a certain light symbolism which can be found in the Bible[36] does not necessarily lead to the sun. On the other hand, it can not be an invention of Ephraem. If the hearers, readers or singers of his hymns could not understand the sun symbolism, it would have been in vain. Ephraem himself gives the reason of the solar motifs and comparisons. The sun was the most powerful star in astrological doctrines. Its position in astrology must reflect a similar status in the local pantheon. It is nearly impossible that the traditional worship of the gods was not influenced by the new teachings. Astronomy and astrology were an unequal pair of twins: theory and practice; science and application. Nobody—except the philosophical school of the sceptics and some Christians—doubted that astrology was a scientific method to unveil the dark future. Long ago the Stoics, especially Poseidonios from Apamea in Syria, had embraced the art of astrology. If astrology and traditional religion were contaminated, the Edessenes must have worshipped the sun as highest god, or a similar god who assumed solar features.

[35] In recent times, some biblical scholars have tried to prove that Yahweh's predecessor in Jerusalem was the sun god. Several tended to identify Yahweh with the sun, or explicitly declared that Yahweh was solarised in late pre-exilic times, e.g. Arneth (2000); Taylor (1993); Janowski (1999), Stähli (1985); Zeeb (2002). Such opinions were formerly held only by outsiders in Old Testament studies.

[36] For Ancient oriental times, see Cassin (1968); for the Old Testament, see Gierlich (1940); Aalen (1951); for the New Testament, see Pulver (1944); Malmede (1986); Schwankl (1995); for Judaism, Iran and Kushan, see Aalen (1951); Colpe (1965); Klein (1962); Mukri (1982); Soper (1949) and (1950); for Classical Antiquity, see Wetter (1915); Bultmann (1948); Beierwaltes (1957); Klein (1962); Bremer (1976); Parisinou (2000); Von Steuben (1999); Cumont (1942a); in general, see Collinet-Guérin (1961).

The Sun God in Edessa

When the emperor Julian prepared his great campaign against the Persian king Shapur, he spent several months in Antioch in Syria. During this time, from July 362 until the fifth day of March 363, he wrote several treatises, including his *Oration on King Helios*. This work, written at night, praises the intelligible sun, whose visible symbol is the sun disc. With reference to the neo-platonist philosopher Iamblichus from Chalcis (ca. AD 250-325), Julian reports that the Edessenes have worshipped the sun god Helios since remote antiquity:[37]

> The inhabitants of Edessa, a place from time immemorial sacred to Helios, associate with him Monimos and Azizos. Iamblichus, from whom I have taken this and all besides, a little from a great store, says that the secret meaning to be interpreted is that Monimos is Hermes and Azizos Ares, the assessors (*paredroi*) of Helios, who are the channel for many blessings to the region of our earth.[38]

If we can rely on the testimony of Iamblichus, namely that the two companions of the sun god are to be identified with Hermes and Ares, the corresponding planetary gods, the local names would, in a Mesopotamian context, be Nabu and Nergal.[39] Nabu and Nergal manifest themselves in the planets Mercury (Hermes) and Mars (Ares).[40] In some Babylonian texts, Marduk appears together with these two gods, as if to set up some kind of triad with them. Marduk is attested in Edessa under his more common name Bel, 'lord', and apparently he was the highest deity in the pantheon of Edessa. But

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[37] The archaeological remains of Edessa are limited. The mosaics and inscriptions do not reveal representations or names of pagan deities. In the museum of Edessa is a badly preserved relief of a family triad, see Drijvers (1980), p.80ff, pl.XXII. In the garden of the museum, visitors can admire eagle statues or reliefs with an eagle. The city coins, minted in the third century AD, show Tyche, the city goddess, with the rivergod Skirtos/Dayṣān, or the city goddess alone, see Tubach (2002). The pagan religion of Edessa has mainly been reconstructed with the help of Greek or Syriac literary texts, see Drijvers (1972), (1978) and (1980).

[38] Spanheim (1696), p.150CD; Hertlein (1875), I, p.195; Wright (1913), I, p.412-3; Lacombrade (1964), II, p.128, ch.34; Asmus (1908), p.159; Mau (1907), p.145; Drijvers (1980), p.147.

[39] For a different explanation, see Drijvers (1972), p.355-71, and id. (1980), p. 146-74.

[40] Cumont (1936), p.14ff; Gundel and Gundel (1950), p.2027f and p.2032f; Eilers (1976), p.66-78, esp. p.67 and p.78.

even if Iamblichus' interpretation did not represent a widespread view, it is improbable that Julian did not regard Helios as the main deity of Edessa.

In the *Acts of Shmona and Gurya* ('young lion'), Edessenian martyrs and victims of the persecution under Diocletian, it is told how all inhabitants of the town are obliged to sacrifice incense before the image of Zeus. Both martyrs of course refuse to do so. The long discussions with the local governor end without any result. The martyrs persist in their point of view that it is not allowed to worship the sun instead of its creator. Zeus is never mentioned in the dialogue between the governor and the martyrs. The text takes for granted that Zeus and 'the sun, our Lord' (*semšā māran*)[41] are one and the same deity.[42] A very similar passage about the sun can be found in the *Acts of Barsamya* ('son of the Red one [= Nergal]').[43] For the inhabitants of Edessa, Zeus was none other but the god Bel, who occupied the first rank in the local pantheon.

In his prose refutations and in his hymns against the heresies, Ephraem reports that Bardaisan had identified God Father, Son and Holy Ghost with sun and moon. He had called God 'Father of Life' (*'abā ḏhayyē*) and the Holy Ghost 'Mother of Life' (*'emmā ḏhayyē*). This divine couple corresponds to sun and moon. The 'Mother of Life' became pregnant in the shape of a fish and bore Christ, the 'Son of Life', *brā ḏhayyē* (*Contra Haereses* 55.1)[44]:

> Something flowed and came down from that Father of Life
> and the Mother of Life became pregnant as a fish and bore him
> and he was called Son of Life.

In the same hymn (55.10), Father and Mother are compared to or identified with the sun and the moon:[45]

> He (i.e. Bardaisan) gave heed to sun and moon, the sun he compared to the Father;
> the moon he compared to the Mother, male and female gods and their children.

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[41] Burkitt, (1913), p.16 l.8 (text); p.102 §42 (translation).

[42] Ibid., p.16f (text); 102f §42-4 (translation). See Greisiger (2005).

[43] Cureton (1864), p.68f (text); p.67f (translation).

[44] *meddem rḏā wanḥeṯ men haw 'abā ḏhayyē / wemmā brāz nūnā beṭnaṯ wīletteh / weṯqrī brā ḏhayyē*, see Beck, (1957), p.207 (text); p.187 (translation).

[45] *bšemšā wsahrā ḥār—bšemšā mṯal labā / bsahrā mṯal lemmā ḏekrē wneqbāṯā / 'allāhē wyaldayhōn*, see ibid., p.209 (text); p.189 (translation).

In his prose refutations, Ephraem reports that 'Bardaisan says of the moon that it is an earth and womb, which is filled up with a sublime and elevated flood.'[46] Bardaisan means with these cryptic words the lunar phases, the waning and waxing of the moon. The sun and the moon, Helios (Sol) and Selene (Luna), were understood as a loving pair and the waning and waxing of the moonlight was interpreted as Selene's ardent desire for Helios. When the moon was completely invisible, Helios and Selene celebrated their wedding. Some later authors, like Agapios of Mabbug-Hierapolis in the tenth century,[47] Michael Syrus in the twelfth century[48] and Barhebraeus in the thirteenth century[49] tell the story in a similar way:[50] the 'Mother of Life' takes off her luminous clothes every month and goes into the 'Father of Life'. This happens in analogy with the moon, which takes off its light and visits the sun. This is no event taken from an old myth: the knowledge that the moon gives no light of its own is the result of Greek astronomical science. Basically, the story is a scientific myth, or science transformed into myth.

Without doubt Bardaisan wanted to explain the mystery of the Trinity to his pagan contemporaries in Edessa. He used for his interpretation the widespread model of a divine family triad, consisting of father, mother and son. Such family triads, as known from Egypt and Syria, hold an eminent place in the local pantheons. The pagan prototype for Bardaisan's divine family must be Atargatis and Hadad.[51] The metamorphosis of the 'Mother of Life' into a fish[52] is connected with the cult of Atargatis or a similar type of goddess in Syria.[53] Neither Atargatis nor the weather god Hadad, often only called Baal, 'lord', were astral deities in the Ancient Near East. Relations to the sun and the moon are confirmed in the Hellenistic-Roman period. The Anatolian or Syrian weather god was the most powerful deity in the pantheon. In Asia Minor he was the head of

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[46] Mitchell (1912-21), I, p.XLII (translation); p.27 l.32-38 (text).
[47] Vasiliev (1948), p.521 l.1-3.
[48] Chabot (1899-1910), I, p.184f (translation); IV, p.111 l.6-12 (text).
[49] Nau (1917), p.255 [=145] l.9 and p.256 l.1-3/256 [=146].
[50] See Drijvers (1966), p.149f.
[51] Ibid., p.151; id. (1980), p.79-81.
[52] Nowadays the fishes of the pools of Edessa (Birkat 'Ibrāhīm, Birkat Zulḫa) are still treated as sacred and are not caught, see Segal (1970), p.8 and p.54f; Drijvers (1978), p.277; id. (1980), p.79f.
[53] Ibid., p.79; Lightfoot (2003), p. 65-72.

the pantheon and in Syria he was often commissioned with the rule over the cosmos. The cult of Atargatis in Edessa is mentioned in literary texts,[54] but not the veneration of her husband Hadad. He received in Achaemenid and early Hellenistic times a more popular Mesopotamian or Babylonian name and was called Bel (simply meaning 'lord' in Akkadian), like the city god of Babylon.

The Supremacy of the Sun God in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods

In the Mediterranean world the sun was never the highest god.[55] One exception is Egypt, where the solar cult played a predominant role since the first pharaohs. But Egyptian religion did not influence the later solar cult. Only in Mesopotamia[56] and Egypt was the sun god masculine. Generally the sun was a female deity in ancient Palestine, Syria and Arabia.[57] Later we sometimes find a male sun god, perhaps under Anatolian and Akkadian influence.[58] The sun cult reached its climax in the third century, when the emperor Aurelian elevated *Sol Invictus*, the 'unconquered sun', to the rank of the highest god of the empire.[59] The rise of the sun god to the highest rank was due to some favourable circumstances. The basis was laid by astronomy, the discoveries of the astronomers were propagated by the horoscope astrology[60] and the invention of the solar calendar promoted the view that the sun was the most powerful celestial body and deity. When astrology was accepted by the Stoic philosophy, the advance of the solar cult could not be stopped.[61] Its spread was irre-

[54] Drijvers (1980), p.76-121.

[55] On Greece, see Jessen (1912); Kerényi (1944); Schauenburg (1955); Seitschek (1989); Letta (1988); Matern (2002); on Rome and Italy, see Wissowa (1912), p.315-7; Marbach (1927); Koch (1933); Latte (1967), p.44, p.231f and p.349f; Radke (1979), p.290; id. (1987), p.129-32; Pfiffig (1975), p.241-6; Sellers (1986).

[56] Shamash (sum. Utu) is the son of the moon god Sin and his wife Ningal, see Sjöberg (1960); Hall (1985); Theuer (2000).

[57] Brockelmann (1908), I, §227d; Beyer (1994), II, p.424.

[58] Donner and Röllig (1962), nº225 l.9; Theuer (2000), p.373ff. In Hebrew and Syriac, the grammatical gender of sun is sometimes feminine or masculine.

[59] Usener (1905); Schmitt (1944); Altheim (1956), II, p.117-21; Halsberghe (1972), p.131-71; Fauth (1995), p.189ff. Cf. Hijmans (1989) and (1996).

[60] Nilsson (1933), p.166ff; id. (1974), p.486ff and p.507ff.

[61] Nilsson (1974), p.510; Dörrie (1974); Reinhardt (1926), p.308-76, id. (1954), p.692-7.

sistible. In principle, the late antique solar cult was a scientific religion. It was founded on the discoveries of astronomy, closely associated with astrology. A basic belief of astrology was that the planets, including the sun and the moon, were manifestations of the great gods of the pantheon. Three arguments were given in Greek and Latin texts on behalf of the supremacy of the sun.[62]

First, the sun causes the change of the four seasons, including warmth, heat and cold. It runs through the ecliptic or zodiac in an inclined path or plane. The intersection between the orbit of the sun and the ecliptic causes the cardinal points, the equinoxes and solstices, the starting point of the four astronomical seasons. Second, the most important discovery with regard to the supremacy of the sun was the following observation: the movements of the planets depend on the course of the sun. When they reach a certain elongation, they return to the sun. This phenomenon is the so-called attractive power of the sun[63] in the geocentric system. The planets behave like dogs on a long lead kept by their master. For this reason, the sun was called 'king'[64] or 'choirmaster in the round dance of the planets'. Third, the moon has no light of its own, but receives it from the sun. Sometimes it was said that even all the stars receives their light from the sun[65] and that the sun enlivenes the sea.[66]

Where did these ideas come from? They probably had their origin in circles of Babylonian astronomers. Already the cuneiform text MUL.APIN (the oldest tablets date from 687 BC)[67] supposed that the orbit of the sun (through the ecliptic) causes the four seasons. The

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[62] Van der Waerden (1966), p.229f; Cumont (1913). Cf. Id. (1909), p.257f, p.279f and p.281; id. (1923), p.172ff; id. (1922), p.100f and p.160f; id. (1929), p.123, p.162 and p.191. Cumont's treatise (1913) has been very influential for a long time, but in the last decades the catchword *ex oriente lux* has changed into *ex oriente tenebrae*, see esp. Hijmans (1989) and (1996). However, Cumont's arguments for the solar cult have not been refuted and no-one has offered a reasonable explanation for this phenomenon. For a short summary of the research on the late antique solar cult, see Bergmann (1998), p.267-9. A refutation of the above-mentioned arguments as based on Cumont is only possible if it can be shown that the new world view provided by astronomy/astrology did not have a deep influence on the ancient cults.

[63] Gundel and Gundel (1950), p.2069, p.2084, p.2088ff and p.2110; Cumont (1913), p.454ff [=8.9f].

[64] Ibid., p.452 [=6] and p.457.1 [=7.1].

[65] Ibid., p.460 [=14]; Gundel and Gundel (1950), p.2110 ; Bidez (1935), p.78.

[66] Cumont (1942b), p.114.

[67] Hunger and Pingree (1989); Van der Waerden (1966), p.64-86; Albani (1994), p.173ff.

ecliptic was divided in four parts, including the cardinal points.[68] In earlier times and still in the Roman period, the hottest days of the summer were not associated with the sun's altitude, but with the dog-star Sirius, who brought the heat of the dog days in July.[69] The Babylonian astronomers knew the movements of the planets in relation to the sun. The planetary reckoning of systems A and B for the celestial movements was based on the elongations which the sun and the planets reached as maximum and minimum.[70] System A and B were invented in the times of the Achaemenids and Seleucids.[71] The phases of the moon were not explained in cuneiform texts, although the Babylonian astronomers watched the moon extensively.[72] Berosus offered an explanation which was based on the attractive power of the sun: the moon had a light and a dark side, and its rotation depended on the strength of the attraction power of the sun.[73] The scholarly sun theology was probably inaugurated by the Babylonians themselves, or by their early disciples in late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic times. In the early Hellenistic period, Marduk,[74] already called sun in the *Enuma Elish*,[75] was considered as sun god and identified with Helios, as the Greek name of Marduk-eriba shows, who was called Heliodoros.[76] The main principles of the solar cult can be derived from Babylonian astronomy, but neither date of origin is known for certain, nor the scholarly circle.[77]

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[68] Tablet II, see Hunger and Pingree (1989), p.70ff, p.128ff, p.139f, p.150f and p.153; Van der Waerden (1966), p.78f; R. Böker in Gundel (1972), p.522-8, esp.525; Brack-Bernsen and Hunger (1999).

[69] Van der Waerden (1966), p.244-6; Baudy (2001), p.52; id. (2002), p.35ff.

[70] For a short explanation of the cardinal points of the planetary movement, see Van der Waerden (1966), p.173 and p.230.

[71] Van der Waerden (1966), p.173-203; Neugebauer (1975). Cf. Swerdlow (1998); Brown (2000).

[72] On the moon reckoning according to system A and B, see Van der Waerden (1966), p.136-72; Neugebauer (1975).

[73] Toulmin and Goodfield (1961), p.45-7; Toulmin (1967), p.65-76.

[74] The Babylonian writing of Marduk's name as ^{d}AMAR.UD suggests a Sumerian etymology ('calf of the sungod'), see Sommerfeld (1982), p.361-2. On solar epitheta of Marduk, see Tallqvist (1938), p.364 and p.368.

[75] Tablet I.102: 'son, sun, sungod of the gods'; VI.127: 'He is the son, the sungod of the gods', see Lambert (1994), p.572 and p.595. It is a learned etymology of Marduk's name.

[76] Van der Spek (1986), p.70 and p.77; id. (1987), p.68-9.

[77] It is probably no mere coincidence that the only eastern representative of the heliocentric system lived in Babylonia. In contrast to Aristarchus of Samos, Seleucus of Seleucia on the Erythraean Sea, on whom see Cumont (1927), should have given

The invention of the first horoscopes in the late fifth century in Babylonia[78] led to a revolution: the dark future could be unveiled, and it was no longer necessary to rely on uncertain methods for a forward glance. The Greeks improved the methods for casting horoscopes, and within a short time astrology had spread all over the lands of the Mediterranean world. *Augures*, *haruspices* and the many oracles could make a course for retraining, but now as astrologers. Within the astrological system, the sun played a predominant role. In the planetary order, the sun was grouped between the upper and lower planets (Saturn—Jupiter—Mars— *Sun* —Venus—Mercury—Moon).[79] The order corresponded to the distance of the planets to the earth. The same order of the planets led to the names for the days of the week. According to this system, every planet reigned for an hour: first hour: Saturn; … seventh hour: Moon; eigth hour: Saturn; … twenty-fourth hour: Mars; twenty-fifth hour: sun = first hour of the new day, day of the sun god = Sunday.[80] The 'ruler' of the first hour of the day gives its name to that day. The planetary week rapidly spread all over the Roman empire and was already known in the first century BC in the small provincial town Pompeii.[81] The cult of the sun was forwarded by the sun calendar, which was introduced by Caesar in the Roman empire.[82] Only some towns of Phoenicia and Syria knew a sun calendar which was independent of the Julian calendar and a little older.[83] Much older is the so-called 'Palestinian sun calendar', propagated by the Books of *Enoch* (third

clear evidence for his heliocentric theory. See Van der Waerden (1970); Neugebauer (1975), II, p.610f and p.697f.

[78] Van der Waerden (1966), p.247-9; Sachs (1952). Cf. Rochberg (1998) and (2004).

[79] This is the so-called 'Chaldean order', see Van der Waerden (1972), p.214-6 [18-20]. It is the usual order of the planets in ancient times. In the heliocentric system the sun (propagated by Aristarchus and Seleucus) and the earth exchange places, see Gundel and Gundel (1950), p.2096ff and p.2100f; Boll (1912), p.2567f. The term 'Chaldeans' is primarily meant in the sense of 'Babylonian astrologers', see Van der Waerden (1972), esp.p.204-7 [=8-11].

[80] Boll (1912), p.2560f, and on another method with the same result (= quart steps or a heptagram within a circle with the planets arranged according to the canonical order), see ibid., p.2557-60.

[81] *CIL* IV, n°5202; Boll (1912), p.2574. Cf. Albius Tibullus (ca 50-19 BC), *Elegies* I.3.18-20. See Gundel and Gundel (1966), p.129.

[82] Nilsson (1933), p.166ff; id. (1974), p.511. Cf. Graf (1997); Hofmann (1934).

[83] Samuel (1972), p.176; Tubach (1994), p.181-9.

century BC)[84] and *Jubilees* (second century BC)[85] and later adopted by the Essenes.[86] All other calendars used in the Orient and the Occident were lunar or luni-solar calendars. The sun calendar is dominated by the sun,[87] the length of the year depends on the tropical or sidereal solar year which is not easy to determine. Most important was that it was now very easy to cast a horoscope.

Very early on, the Stoic philosophy adopted astrology as a science. Some of the leading Stoic philosophers came from the east, from Syria[88] and Babylonia. They had no aversions to astrology. Cleanthes[89] and Posidonius[90] regarded the sun as 'heart of the cosmos'. Moreover, the sun played a predominant role in social utopias of eastern origin.[91] With the help of philosophy, solar calendar, planetary week, astrology and astronomy, the sun respectively the sun god was raised to the highest rank in the cosmos. If the head of a local pantheon did not want to lose his power, he had to stress his extant solar features or adopt a solar character.[92]

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[84] Albani (1994), p.42-98, esp. p.48-51. The astronomical system of *Enoch* is of Babylonian origin and deeply influenced by the cuneiform series MUL.APIN, see ibid., p.173-272). The calendar is no invention made in Palestine.

[85] Id. (1997), p.79-125, esp. p.83ff; Glessmer (1997).

[86] Albani (1997), esp. p.83-8 and p.93-7; Vanderkam (1998).

[87] Nilsson (1974), p.511; Dörrie (1974), p.284; Glessmer (1997), p.145f. The length of the Egyptian calendar is determined by the rising time of the Sothis (Egyptian Sepdet), the Sirius star. Between two heliacal risings elapse three hundred and sixty-five days. The cardinal points of the sun's orbit, the solstices and equinoxes, are not relevant. *Enoch*'s calendar stresses these points of intersection between the course of the sun and the ecliptic. Only such a calendar is really dominated by the sun.

[88] Posidonius' hometown was Apamea on the Orontes, and Diogenes, the Babylonian, came from Seleucia on the Tigris. The latter became head of the Stoic school after Zenon of Tarsos. In general, see Pohlenz (1926a).

[89] Bidez (1932), p.274 ; Jessen (1912), p.62; Jones (1932), p.126.

[90] Cumont (1913), p.458 and p.473-5 [12.27-29]; Reinhardt (1926), p.308-76; id. (1954), p.692-7 ; Pohlenz (1926b), p.302ff [228ff], esp. p.306 [232]. See Cumont (1922), p.160f; Nilsson (1974), p.264 (in contrast to p.510).

[91] Iambulos' and Aristonikos' state of the sun, see Von Pöhlmann (1925), II, p.305-24 and p.404-6. Cf. Daubner (2003).

[92] E.g. Yahweh, see Maier (1979); Smith (1982) and (1984); e.g. in the Iranian world Urmaysde [= Urmazda < Ahura Mazda], the usual word for sun in Khotan Saka, see Bailey (1979), p.40a; Widengren (1965), p.334; for further examples of other Iranian languages, see Eilers (1976), p.20.

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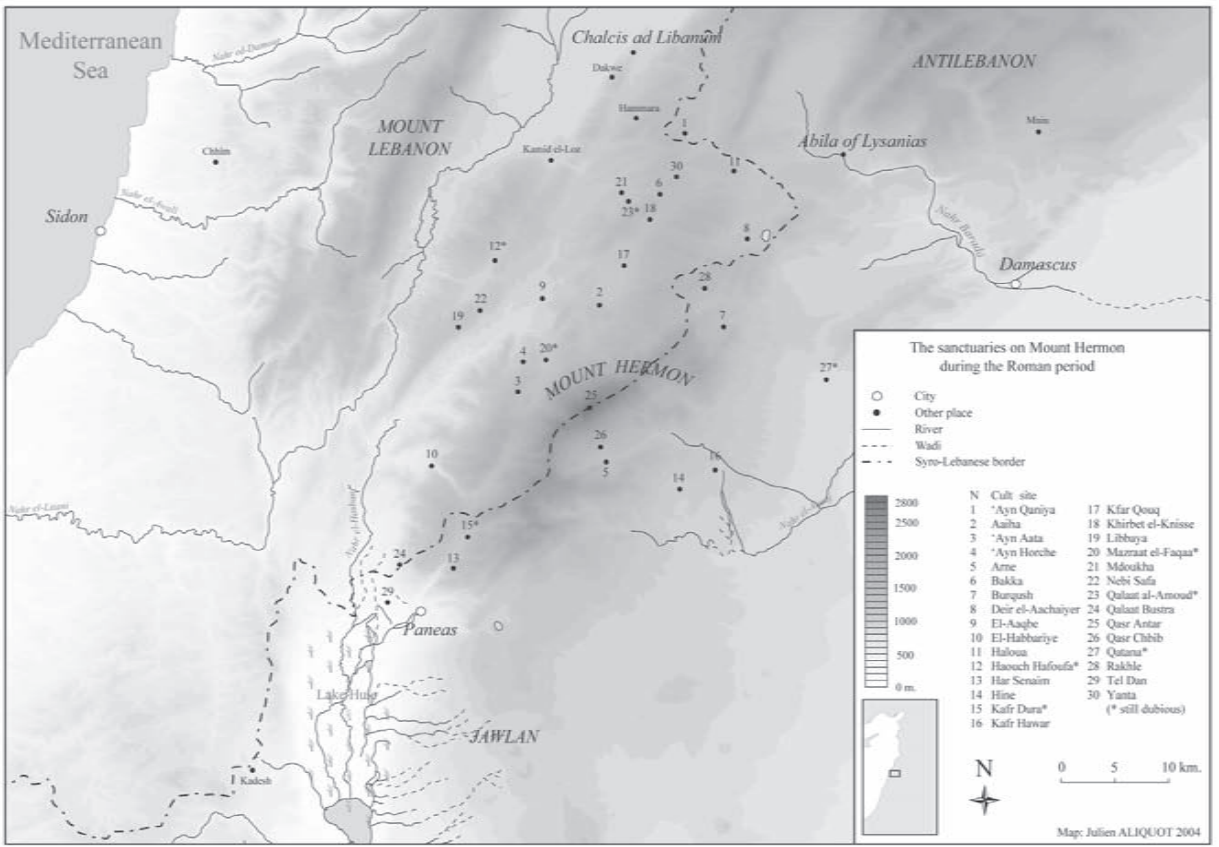

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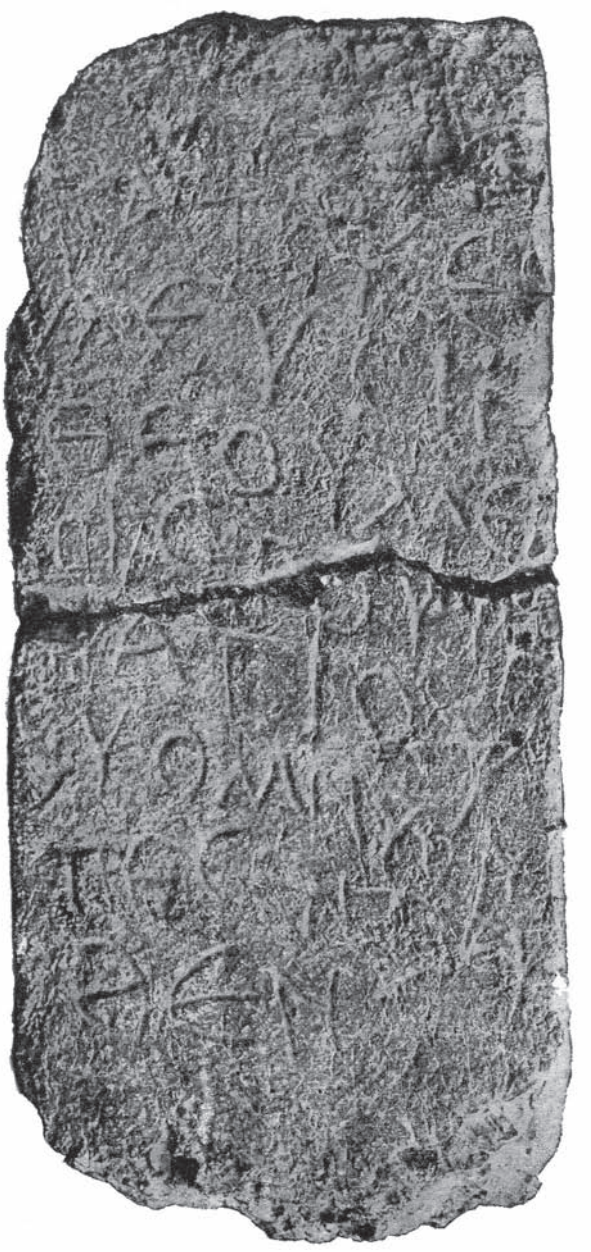

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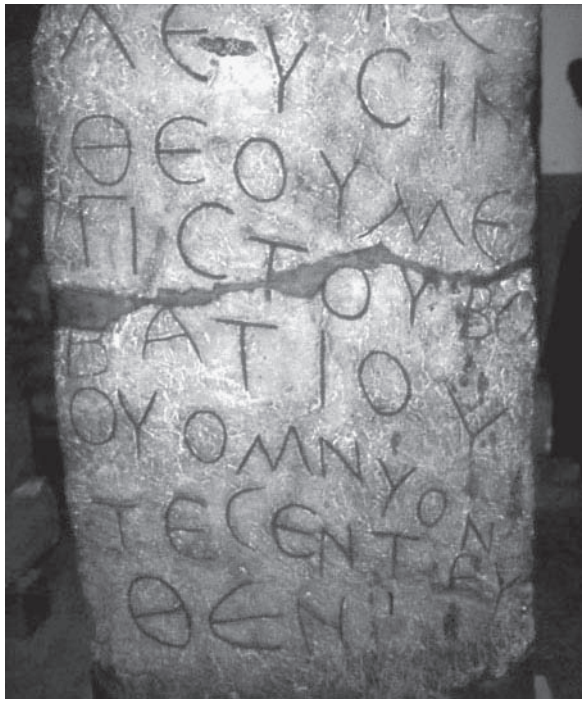

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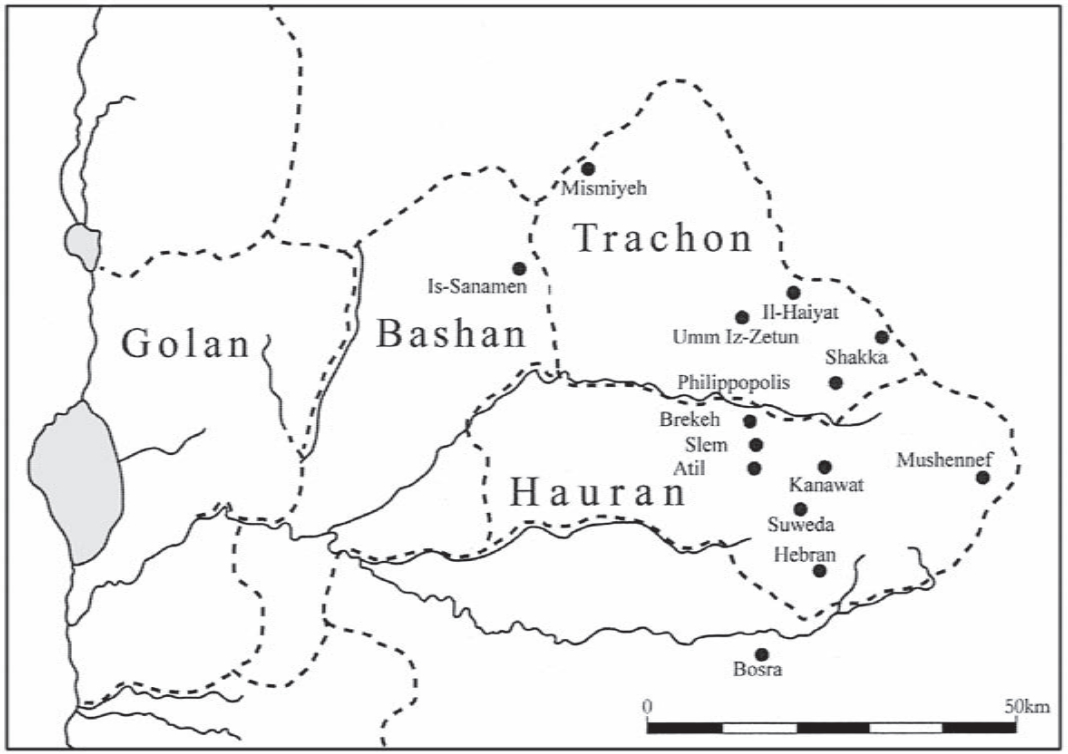

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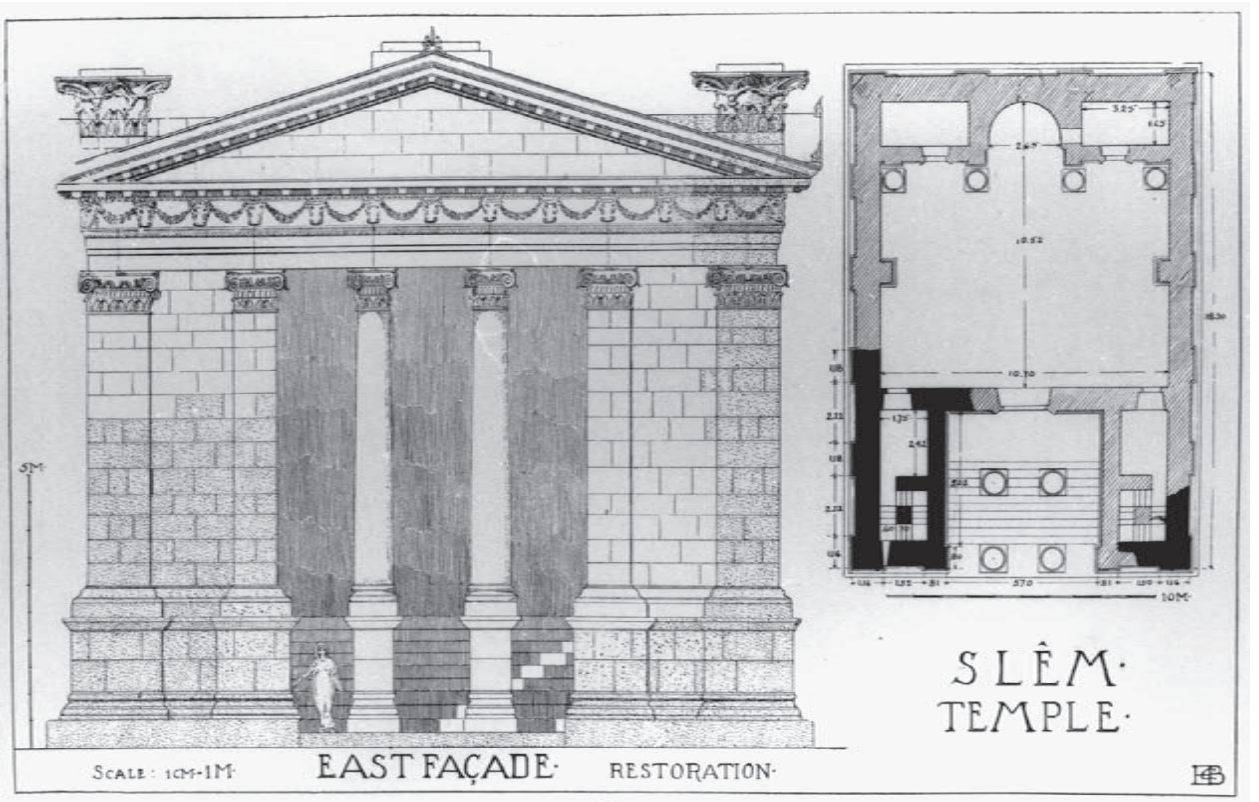

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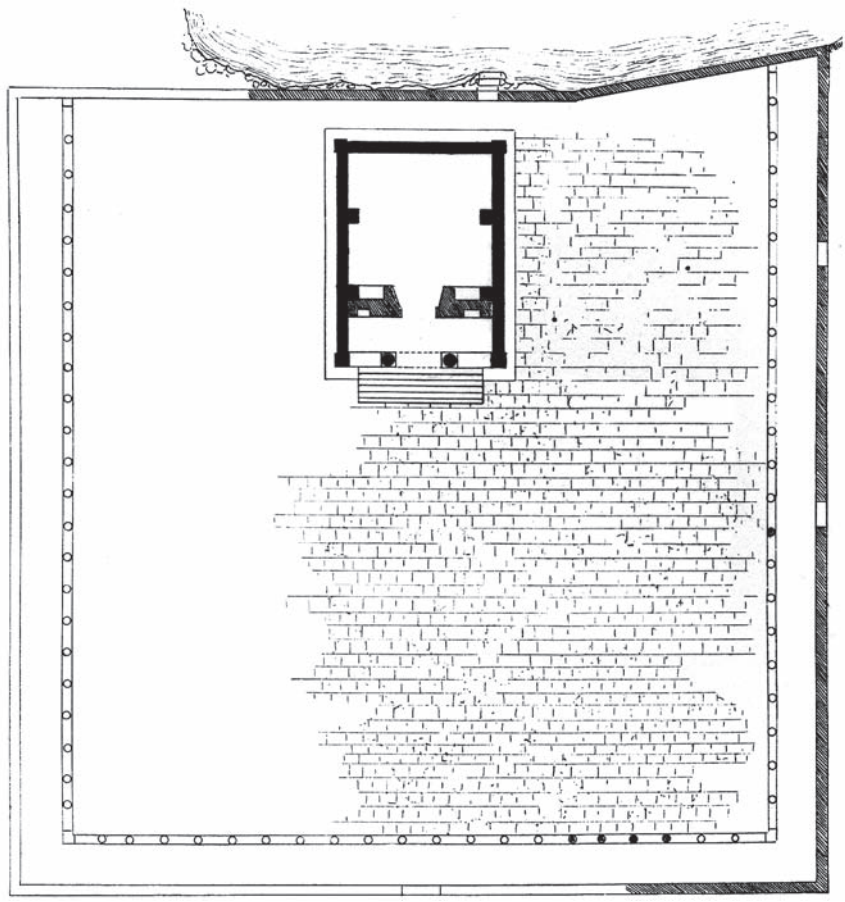

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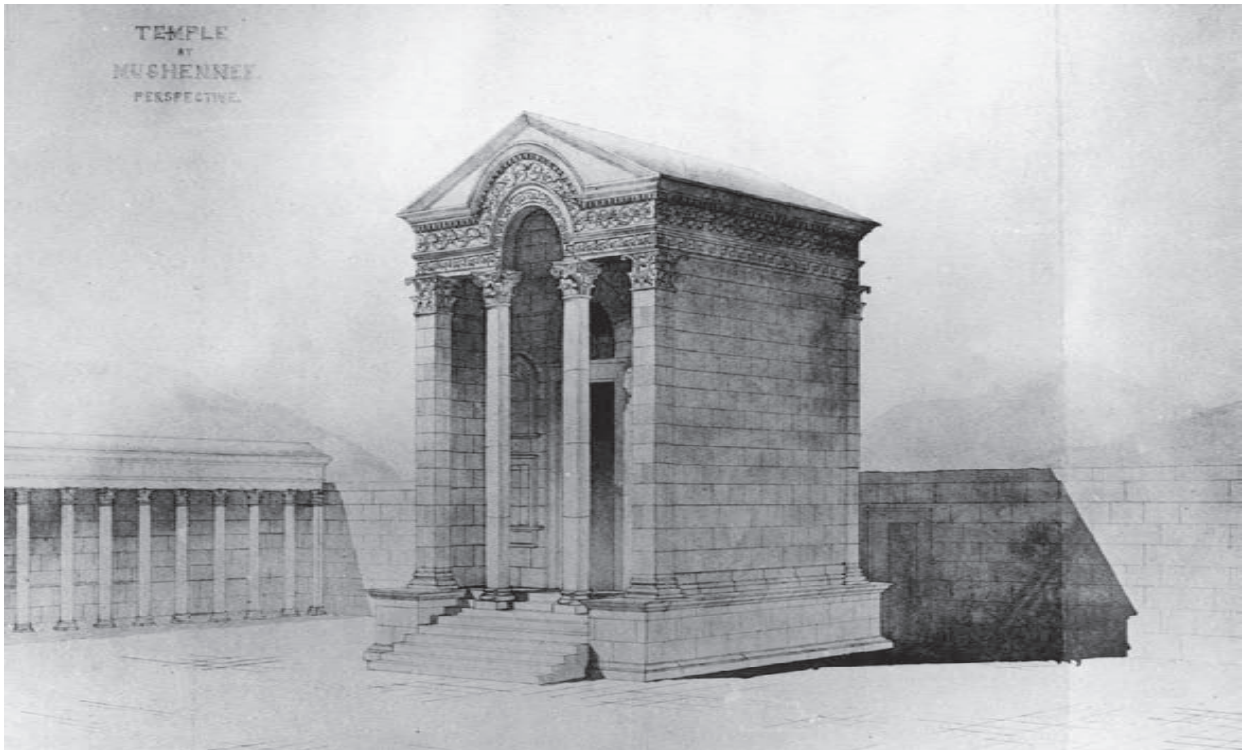

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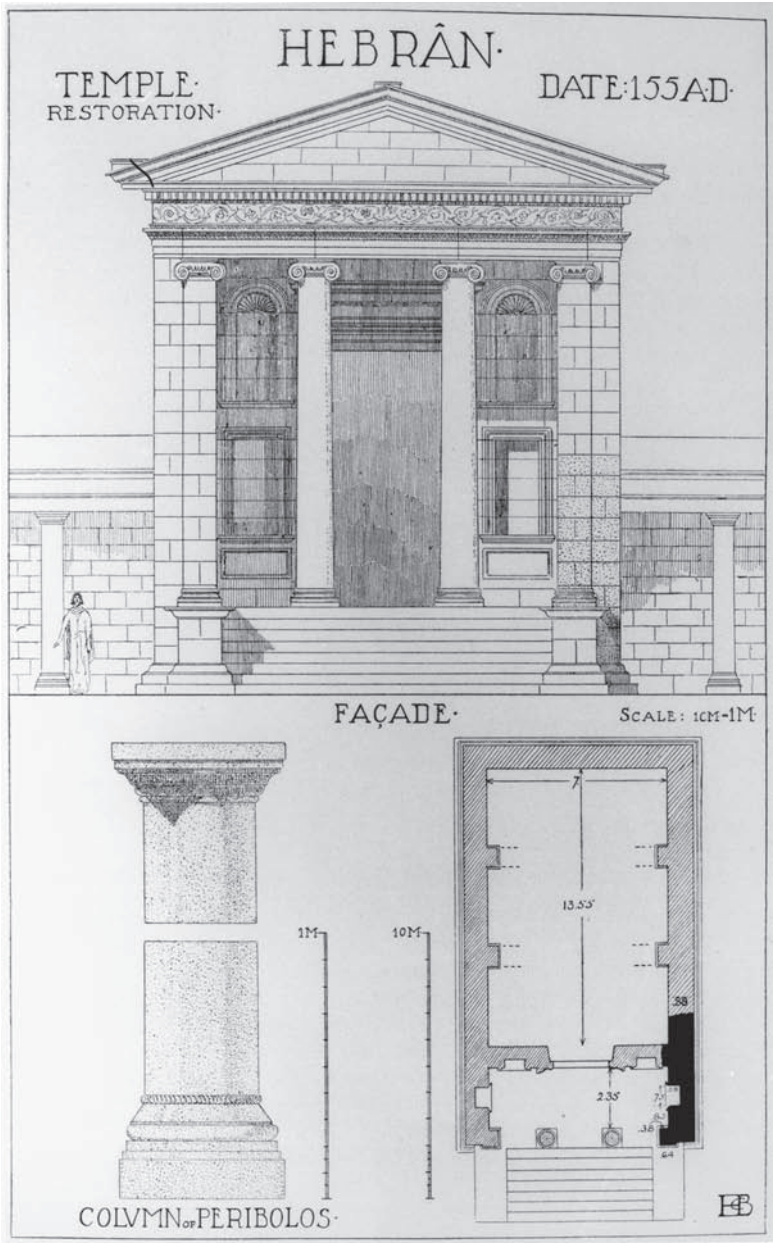

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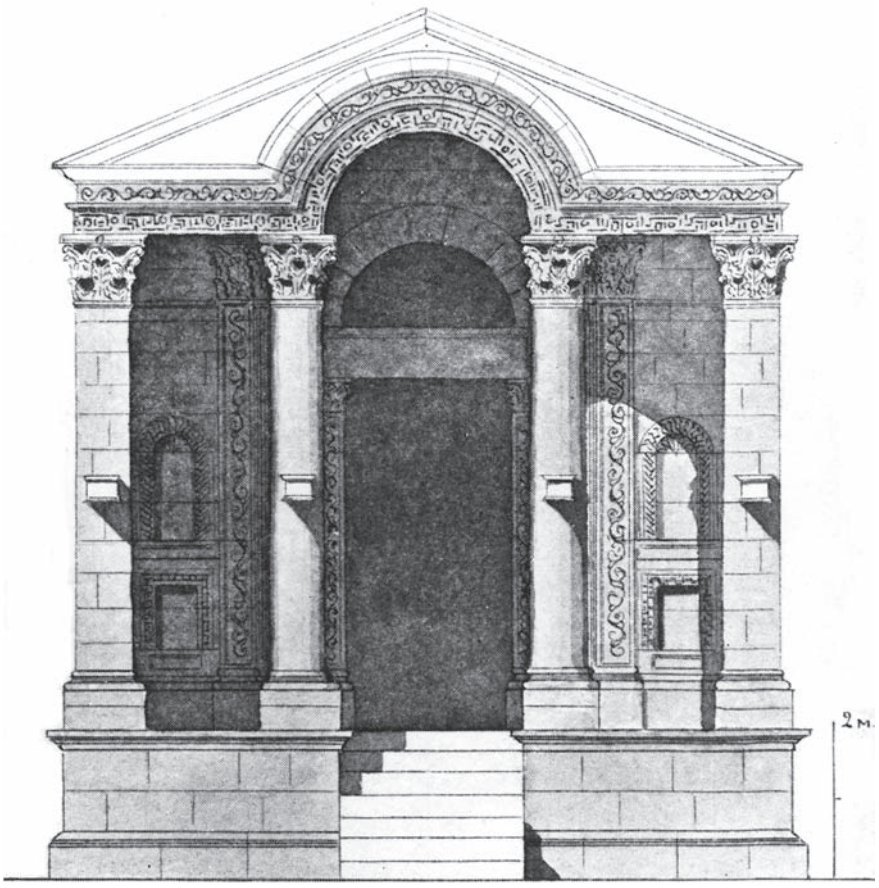

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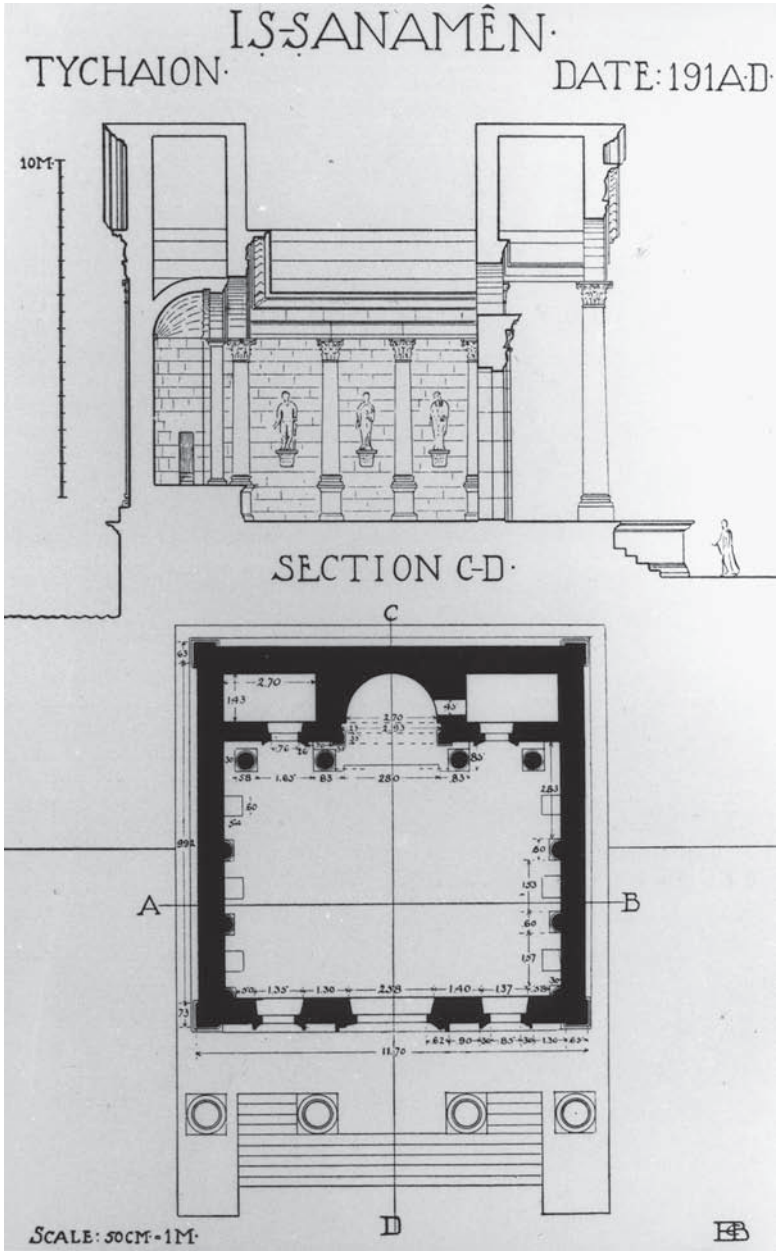

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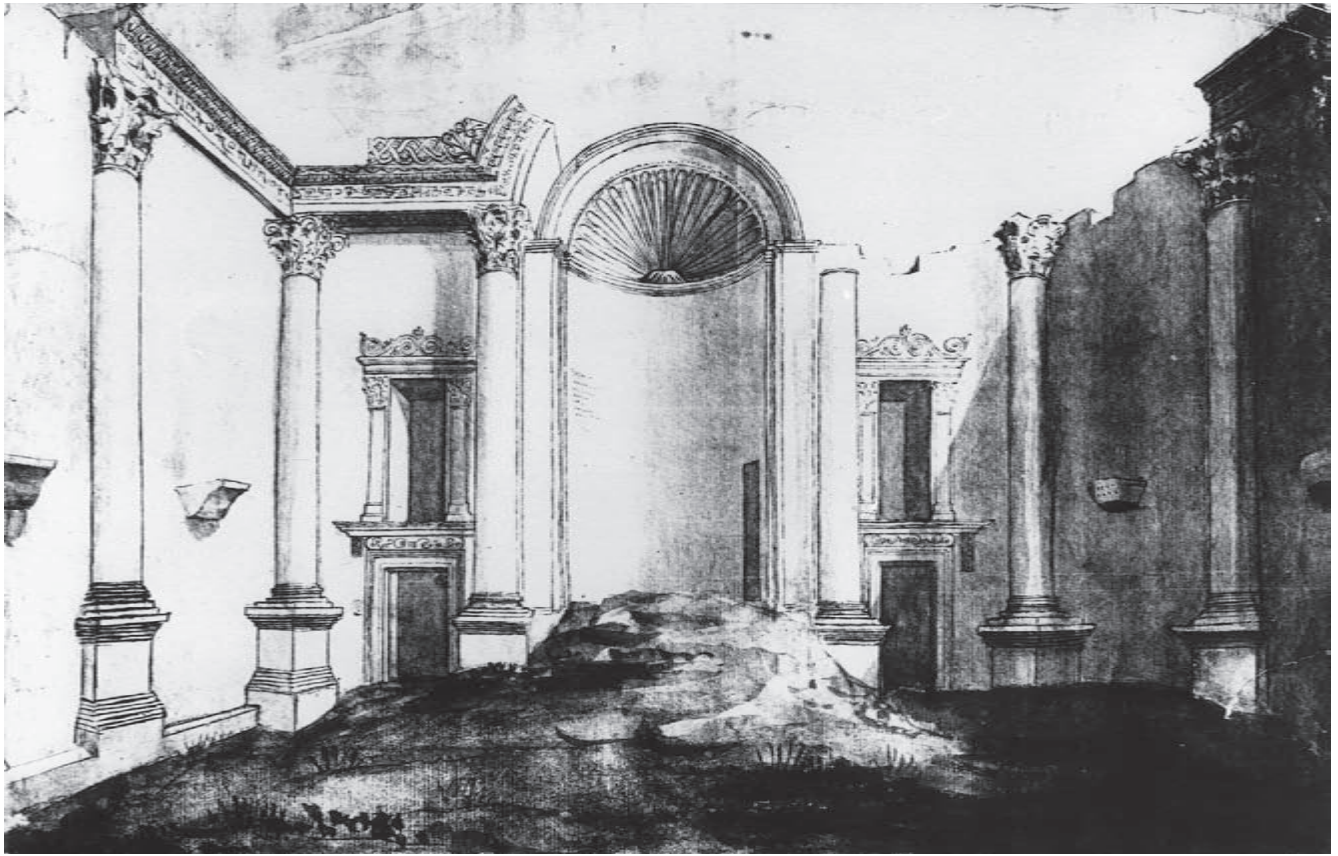

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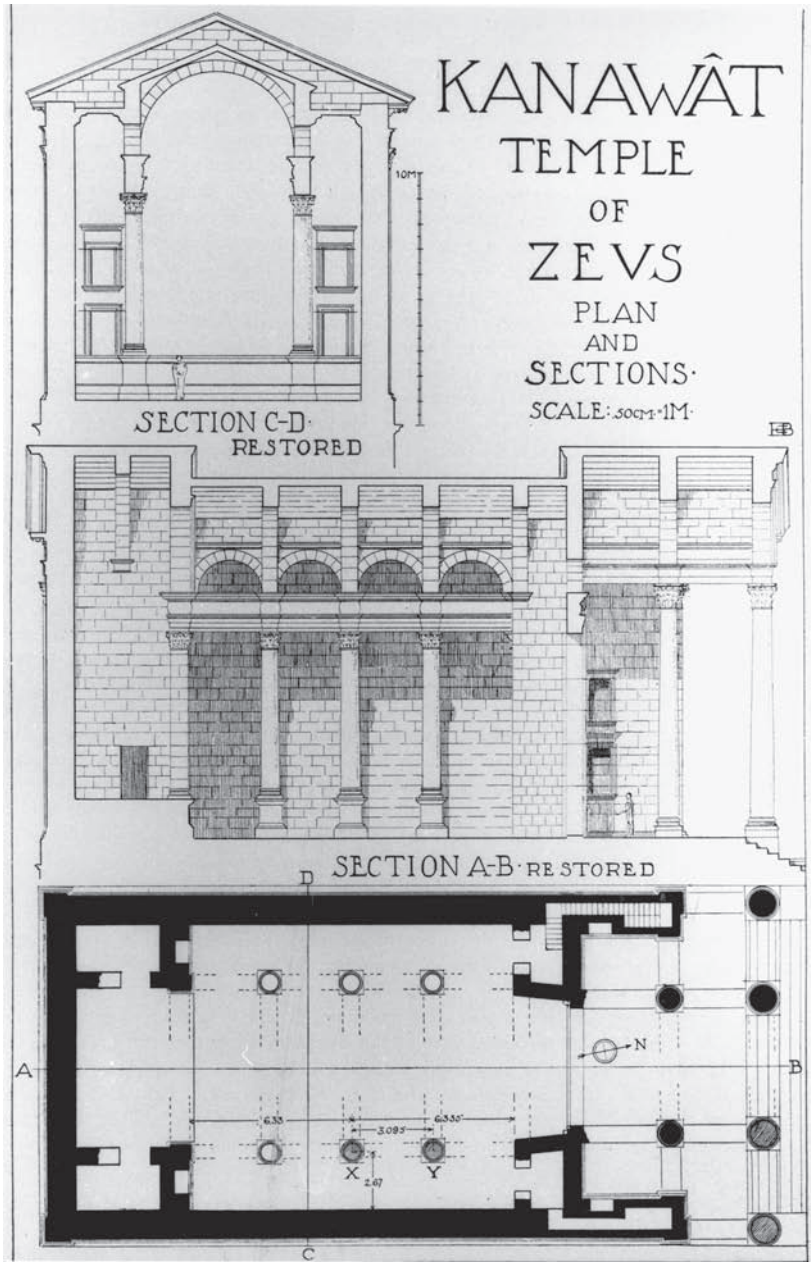

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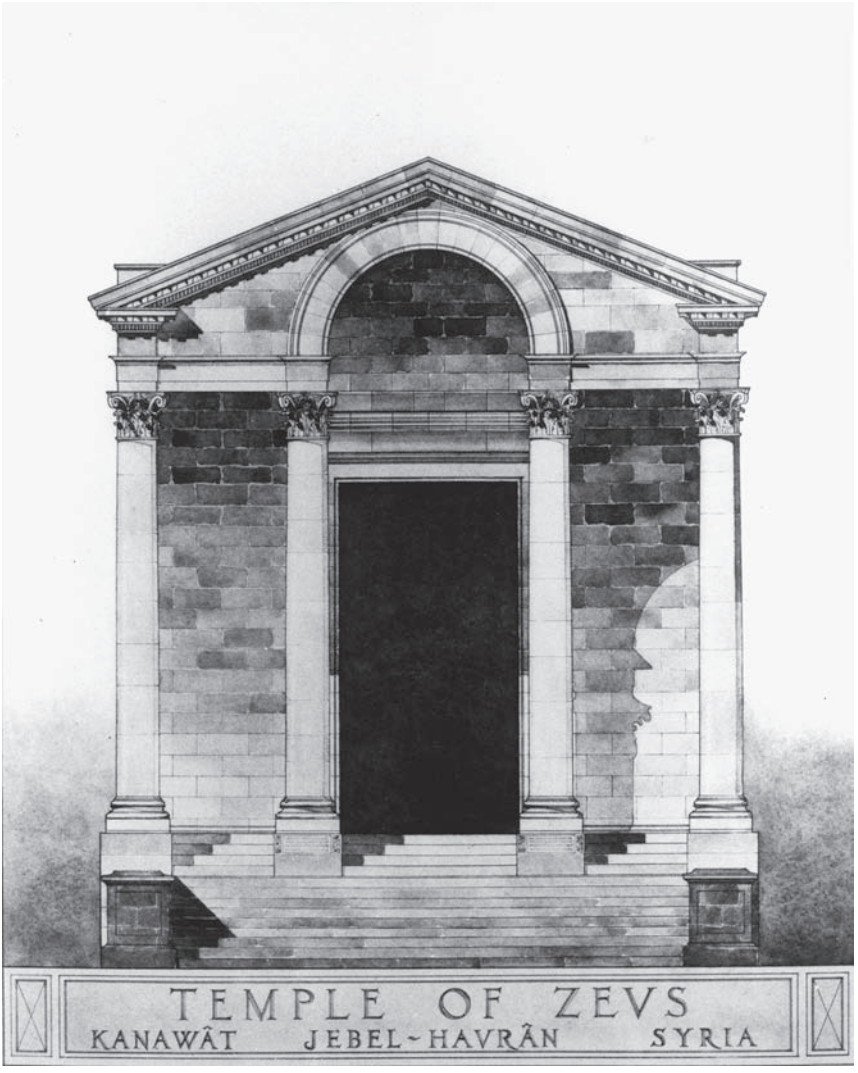

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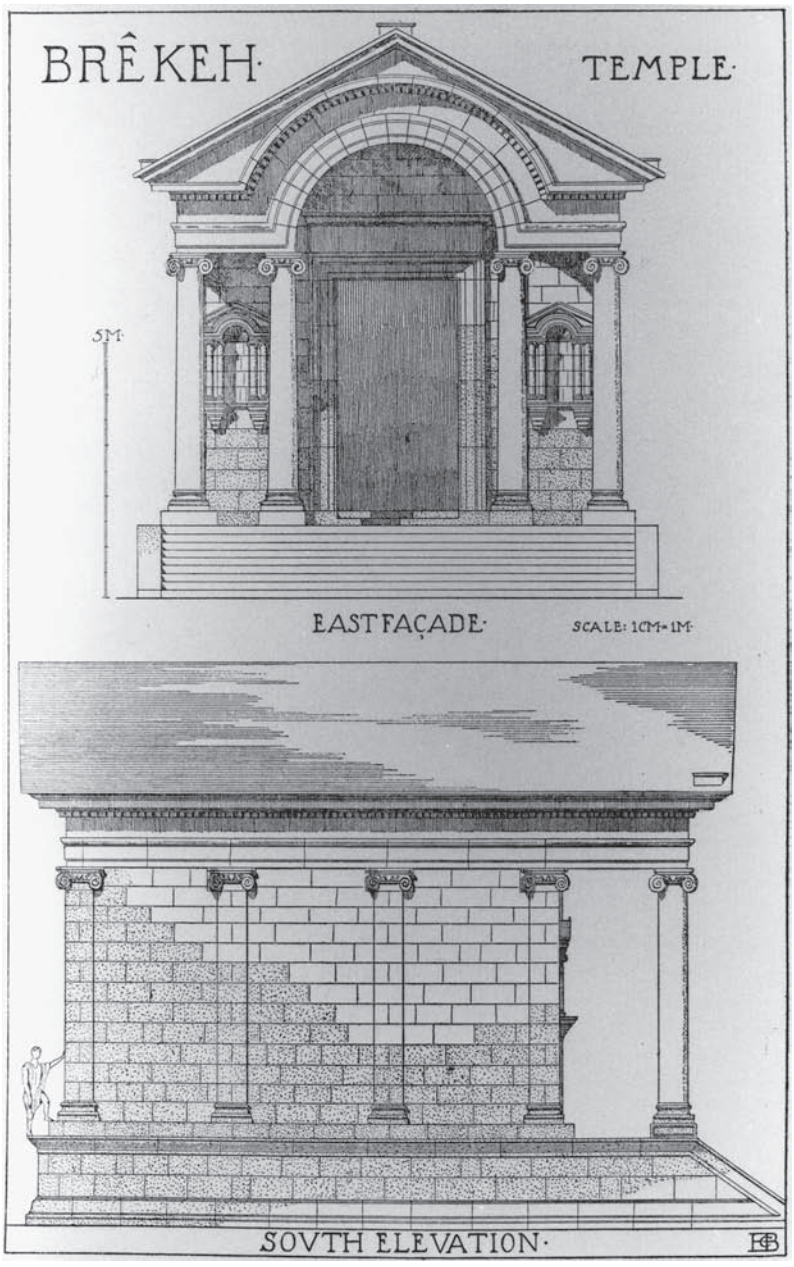

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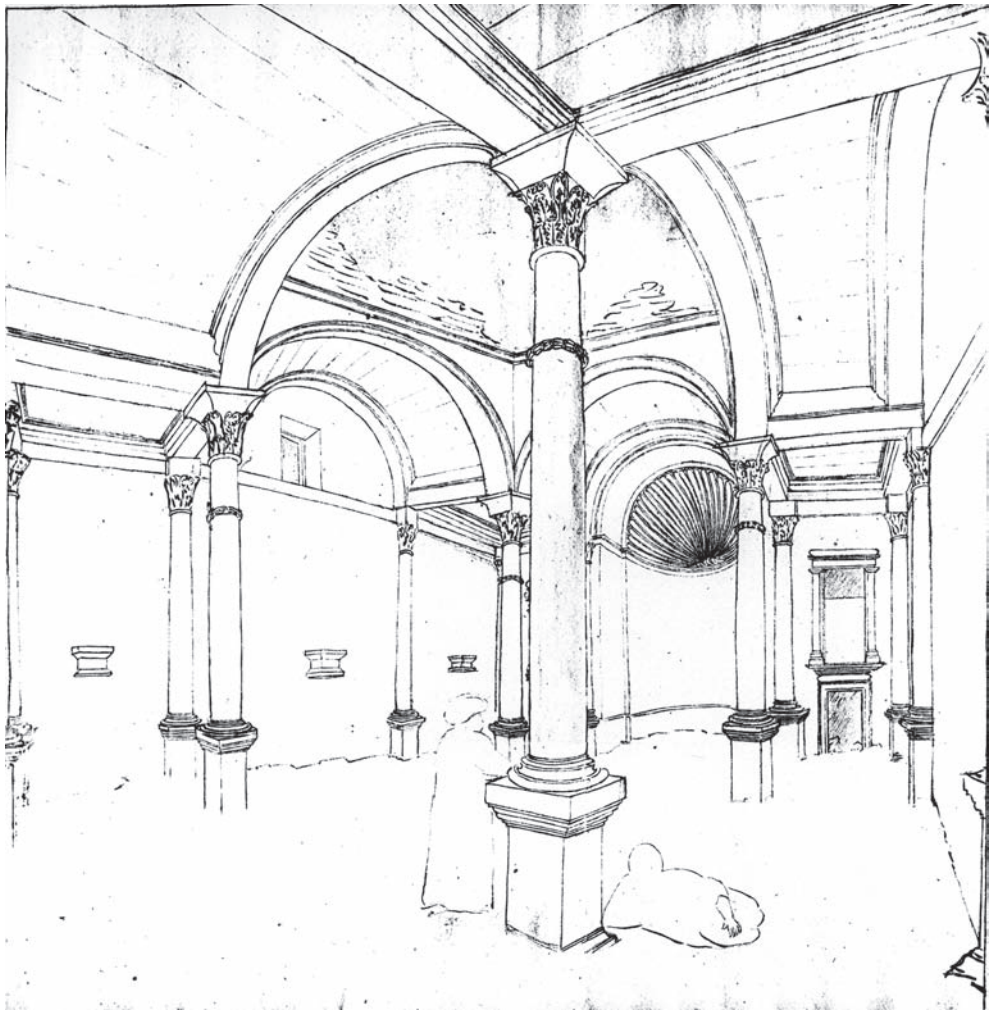

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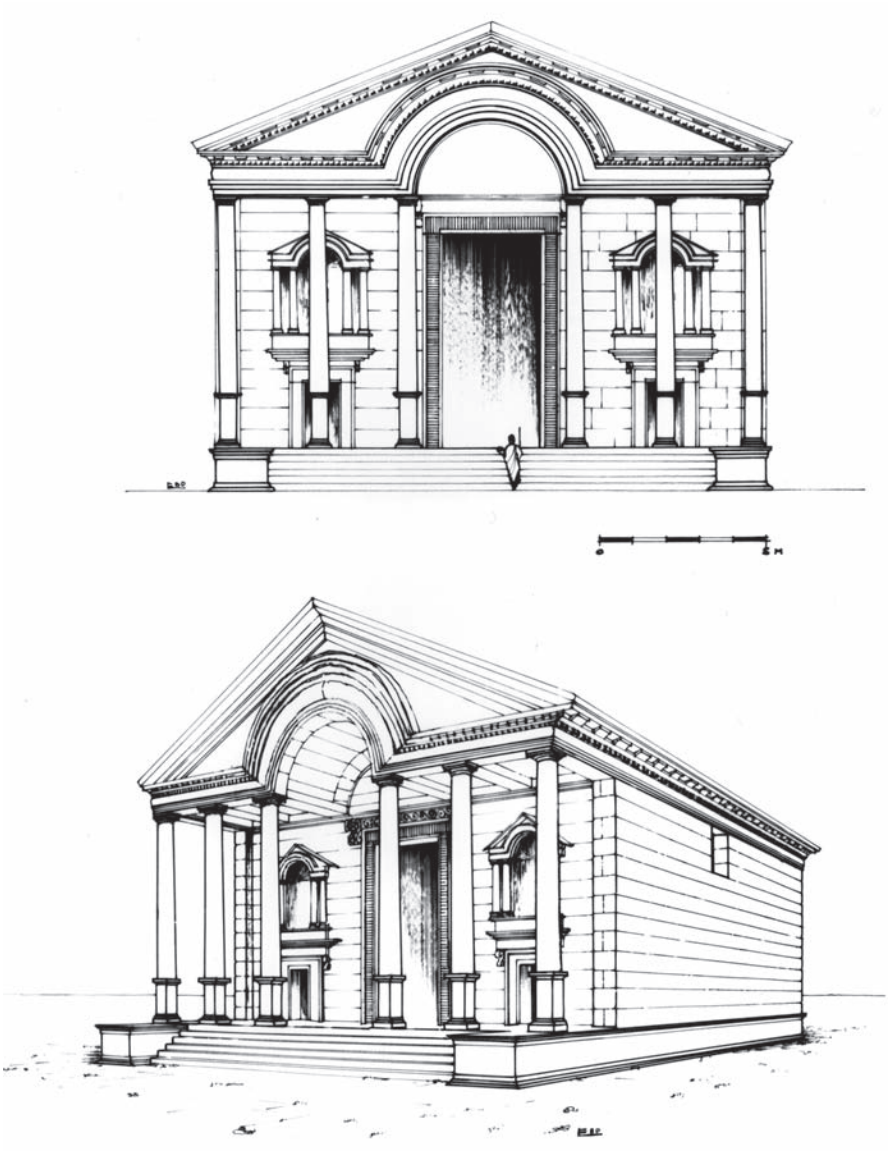

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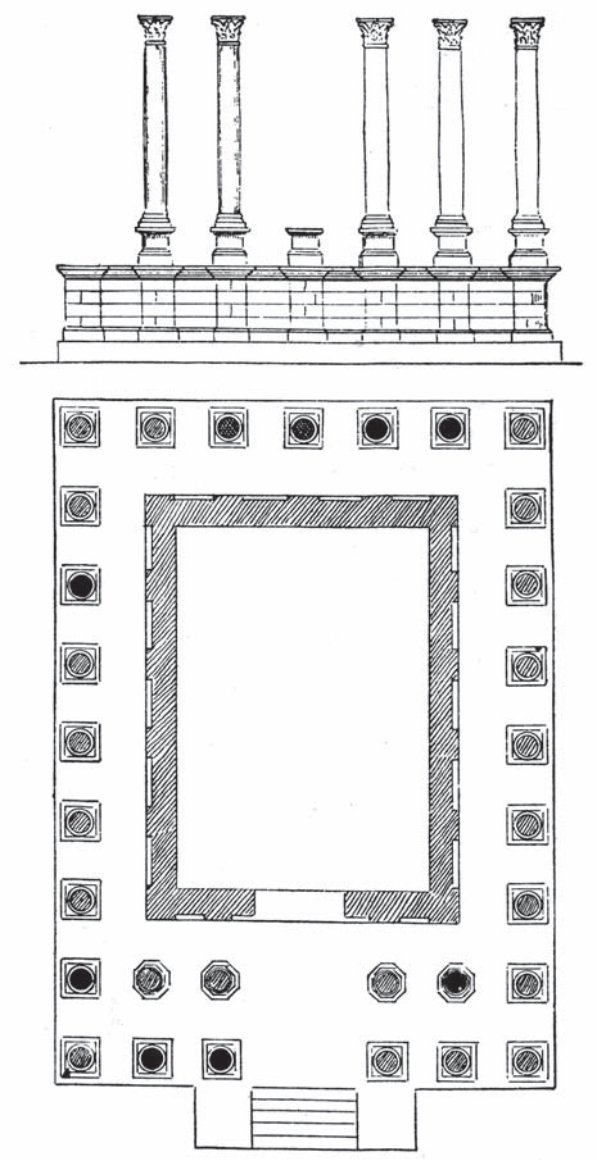

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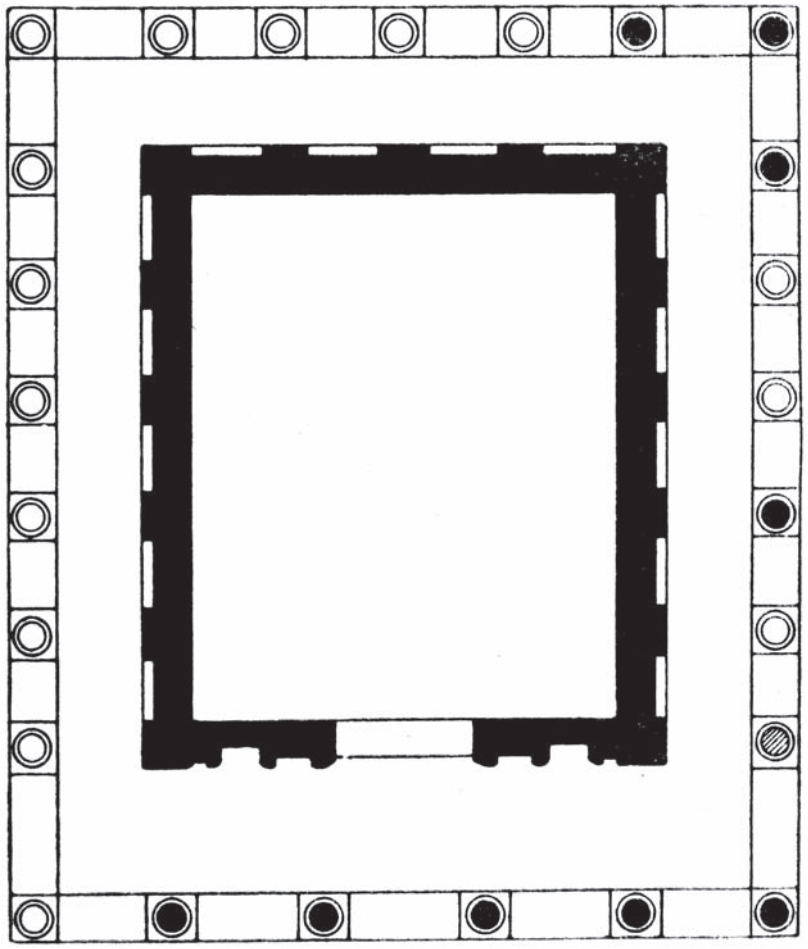

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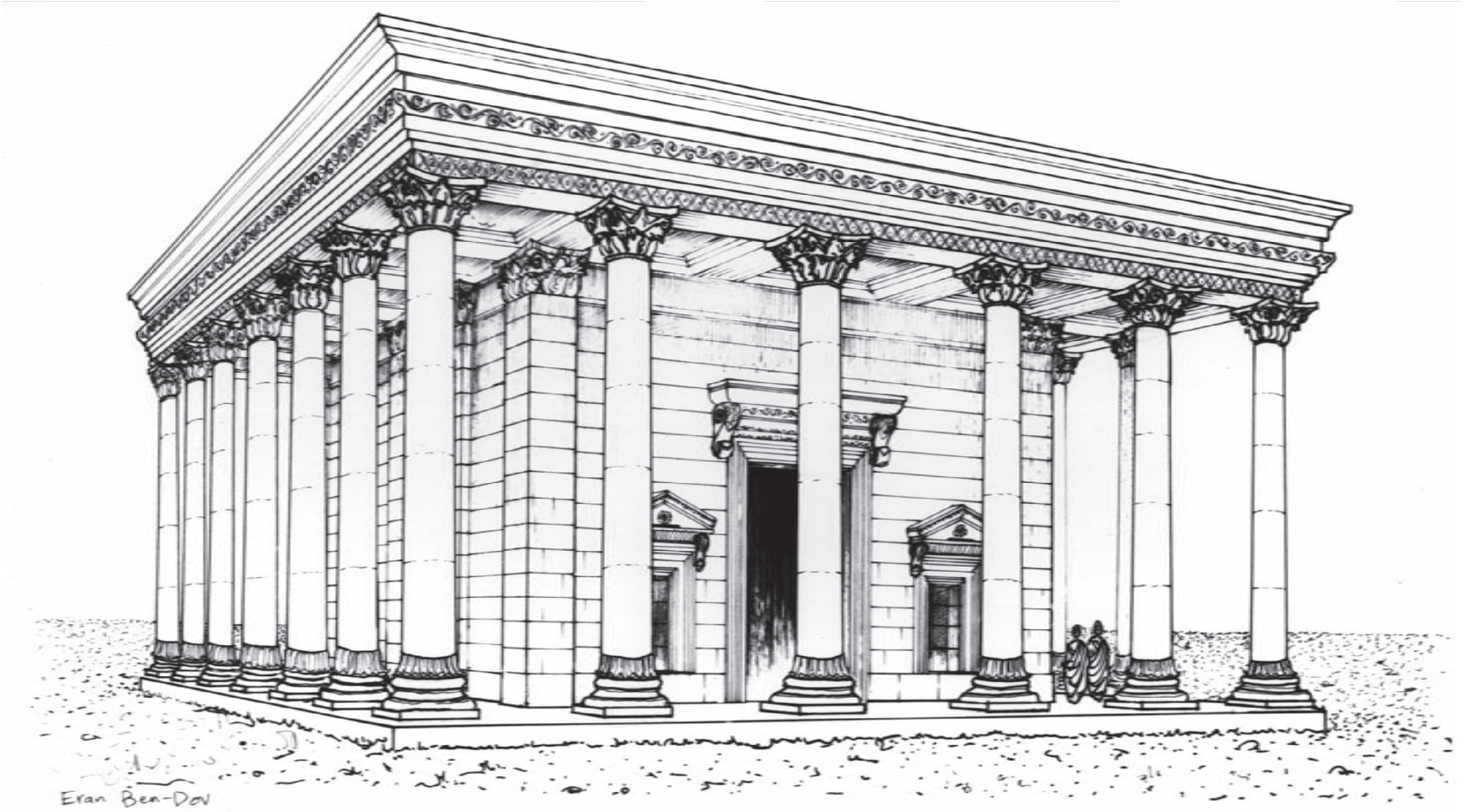

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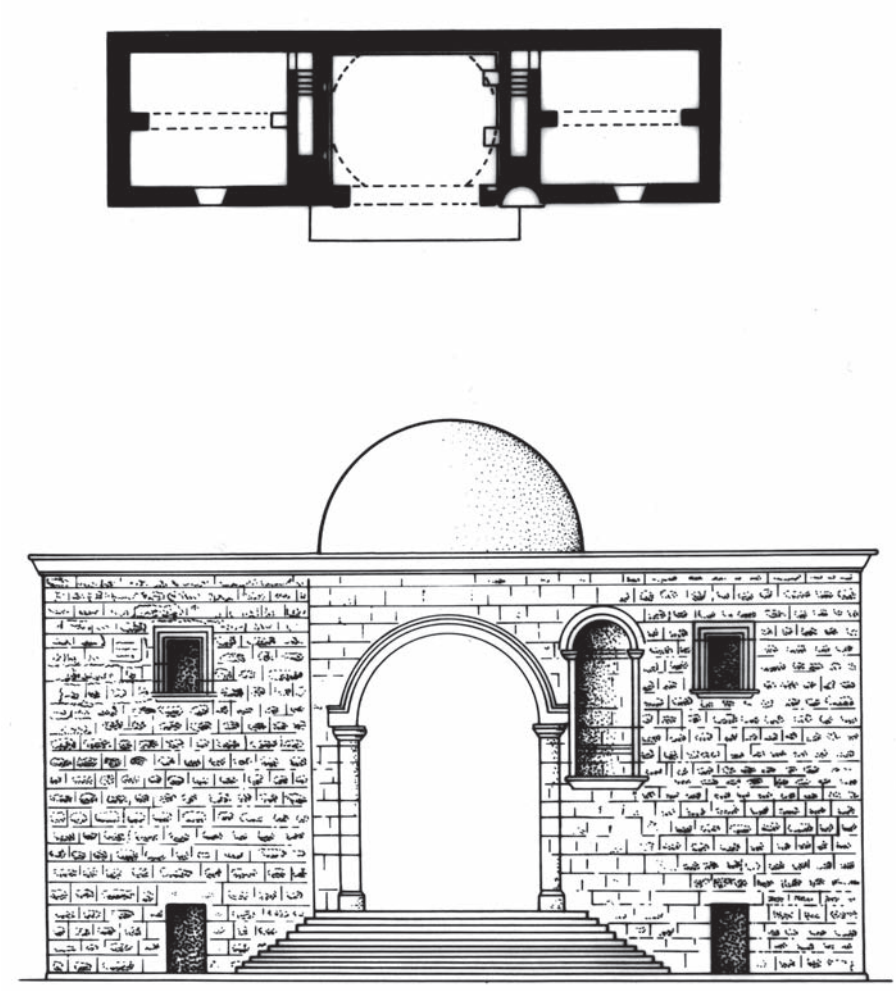

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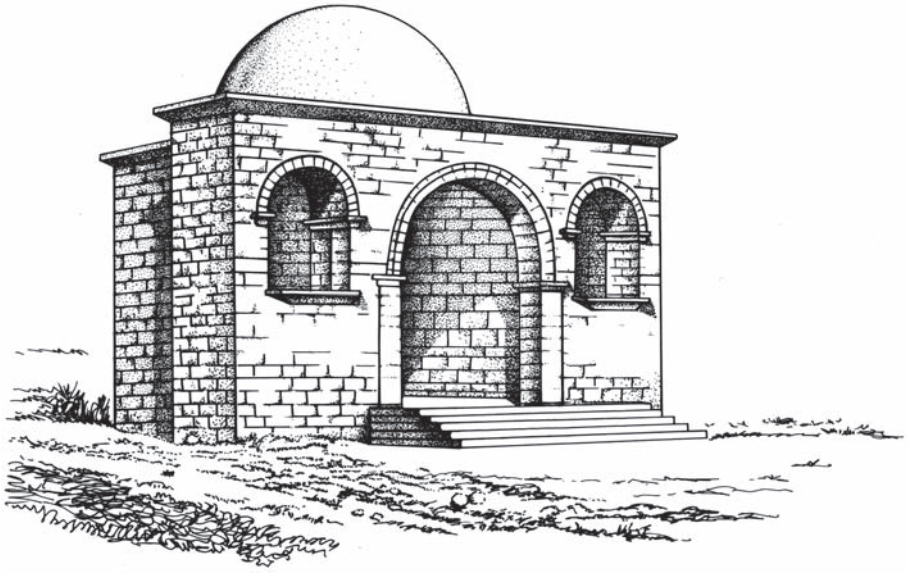

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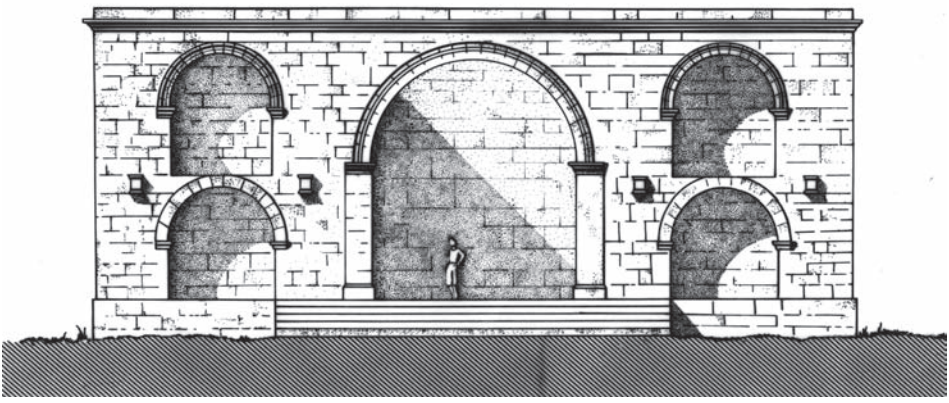

Plate XXXVI Shakka: *Kalybe* temple, suggested reconstruction of the entrance front. From de Vogüé (1867), pl.VI.

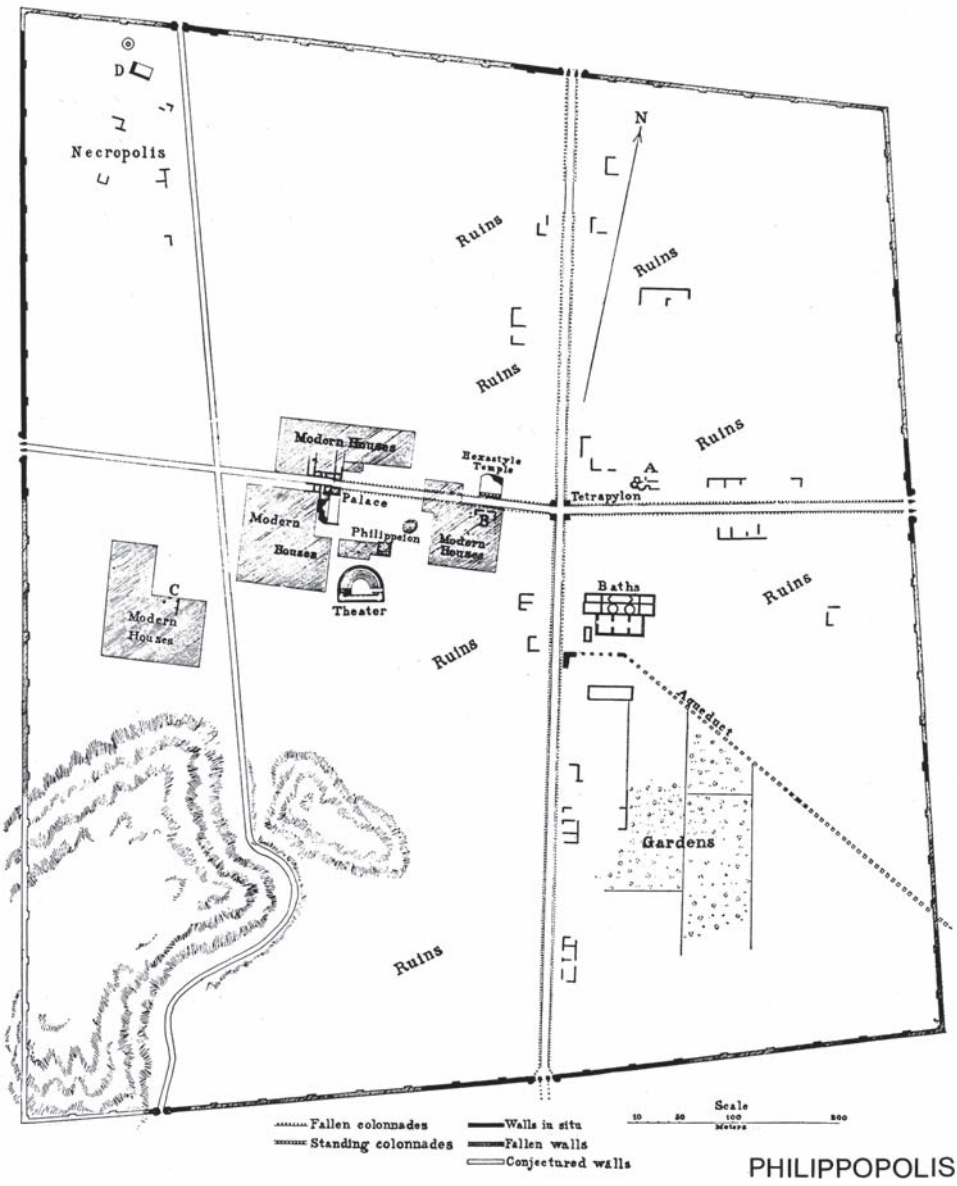

Plate XXXVII Philippopolis: city-plan. Note the location of the *Hexastyle* and the *Kalybe* temples. From *PAAES* II (1903), p.376, fig.130.

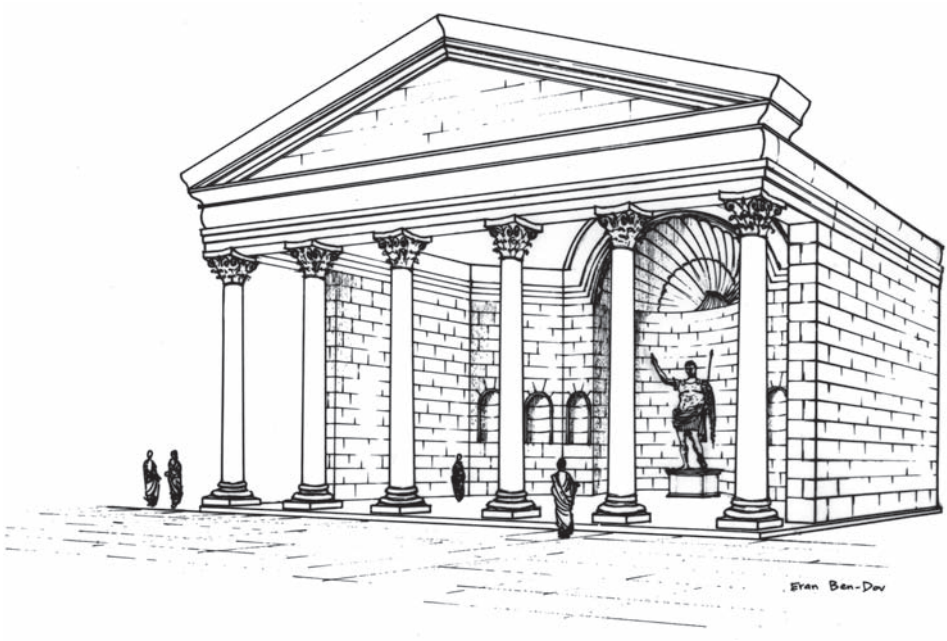

Plate XXXVIII Philippopolis: *Hexastyle temple*, suggested reconstruction, drawn by Eran Ben-Dov. From A. Segal's collection.

Plate XXXIX Kanawat: general view from the north of the Byzantine religious complex, photographed in 1900. Note the columns of *Temple C* incorporated into the Byzantine church. From PEF Photographic Archive, London.

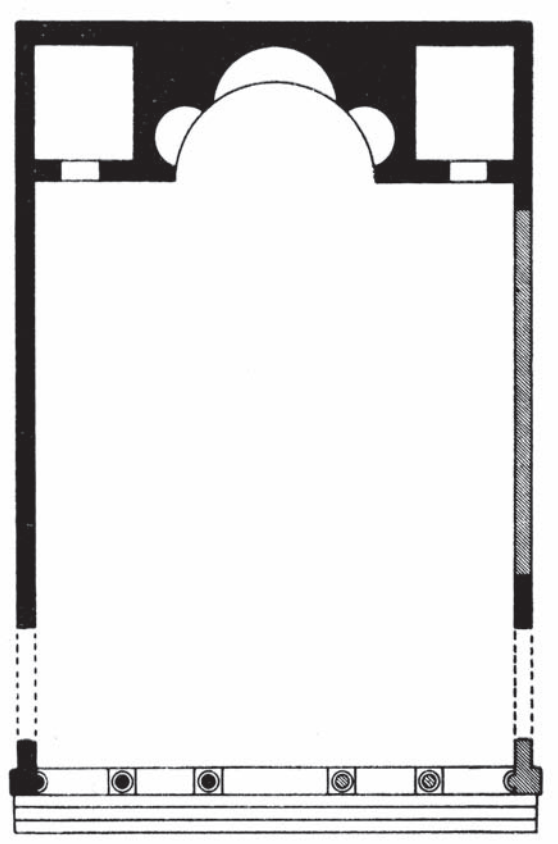

Plate XL Kanawat: *Temple C*, schematic plan. From *PAAES* II (1903), p.358, fig.126.

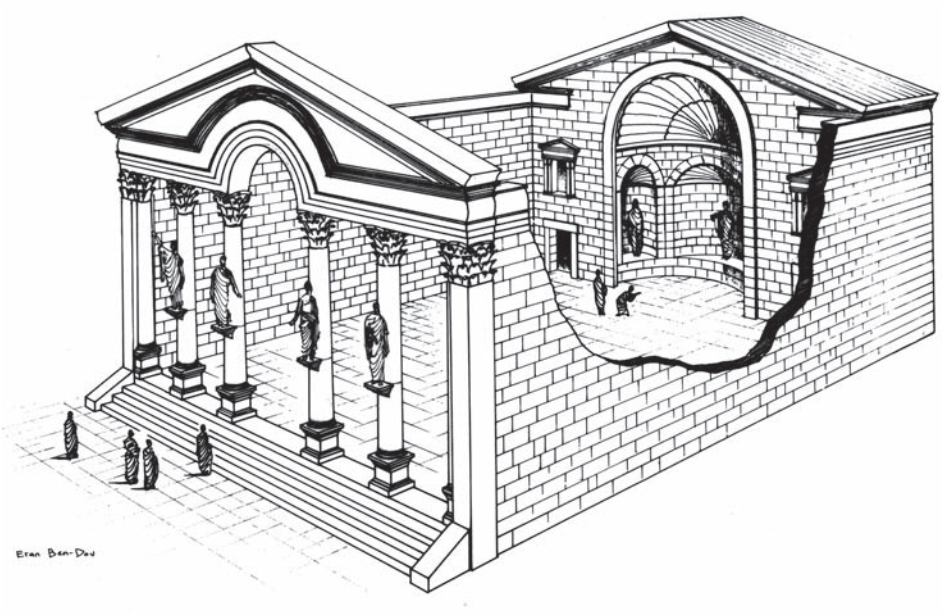

Plate XLI Kanawat: *Temple C*, suggested reconstruction, drawn by Eran Ben-Dov. From A. Segal's collection.

Plate XLII Philippopolis: general view of the *Kalybe* from the east, photographed by Hazel Dodge in 1985 before its partial restoration. From A. Segal's collection.

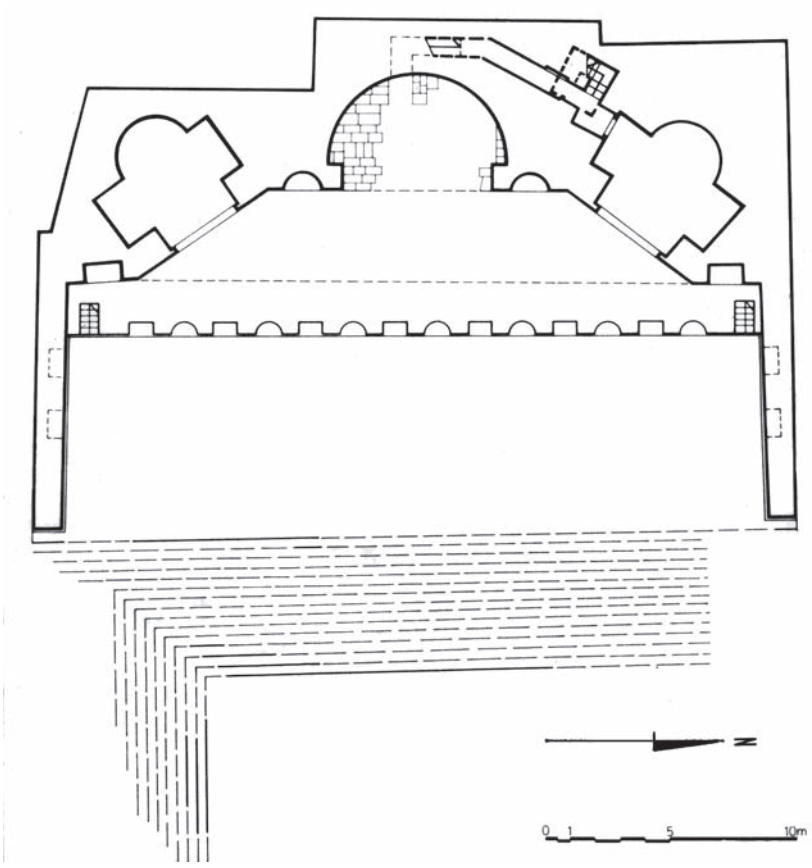

Plate XLIII Philippopolis: schematic plan of the *Kalybe*. From Amer and Gawlikowski (1985), p.4, fig.2.

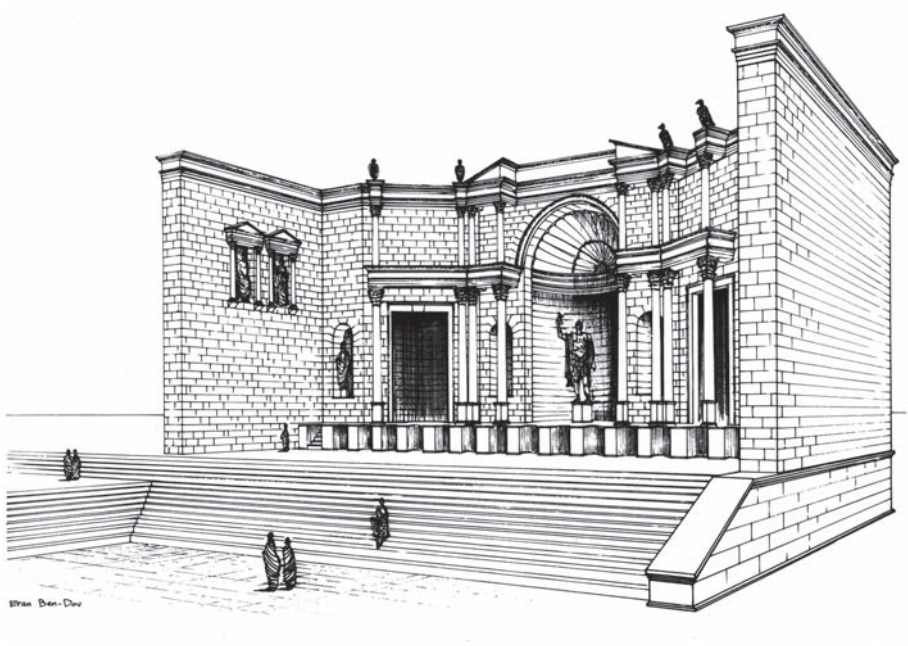

Plate XLIV Philippopolis: suggested reconstruction of the *Kalybe*, drawn by Eran Ben-Dov. From A. Segal's collection.

Plate XLV Bostra: the *Nymphaeum* and the *Kalybe* as photographed in 1900. From PEF Photographic Archive, London.

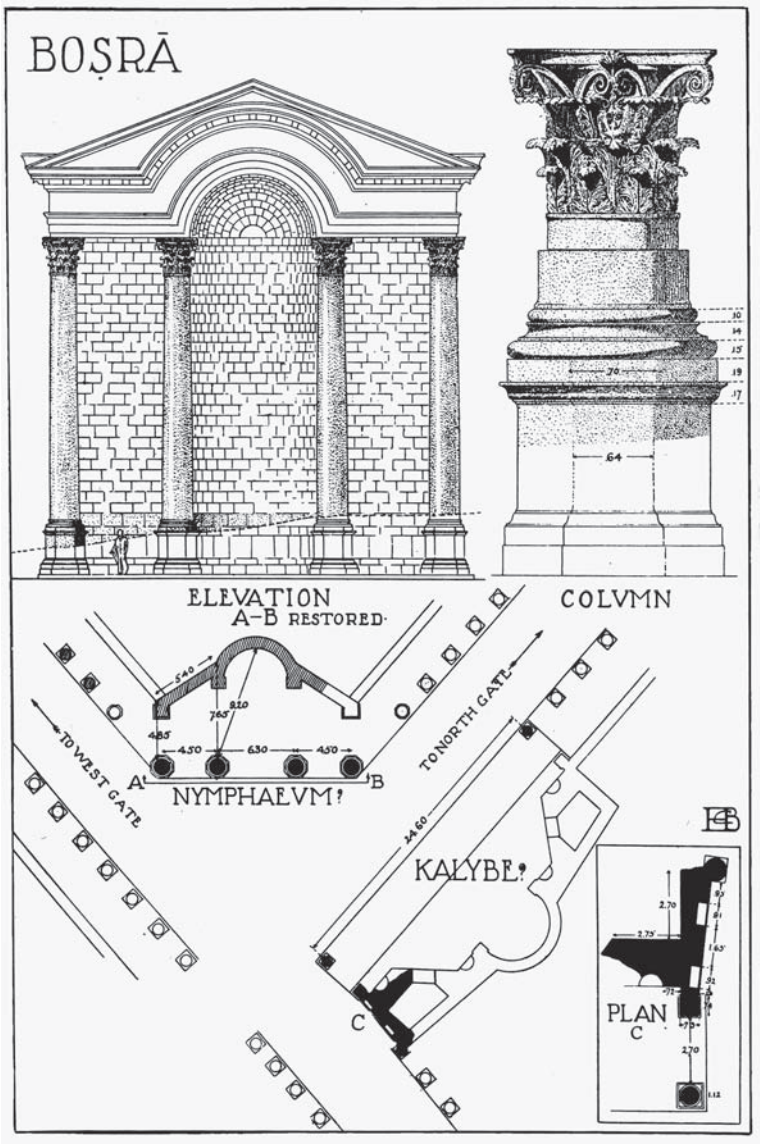

Plate XLVI Bostra: city centre. Note the spatial relationship between the *Nymphaeum* and the *Kalybe*. From *PUAES* II.A.4 (1914), p.253, ill.226.

Plate XLVII Bostra: suggested reconstruction of the *Kalybe*, drawn by Eran Ben-Dov. From A. Segal's collection.

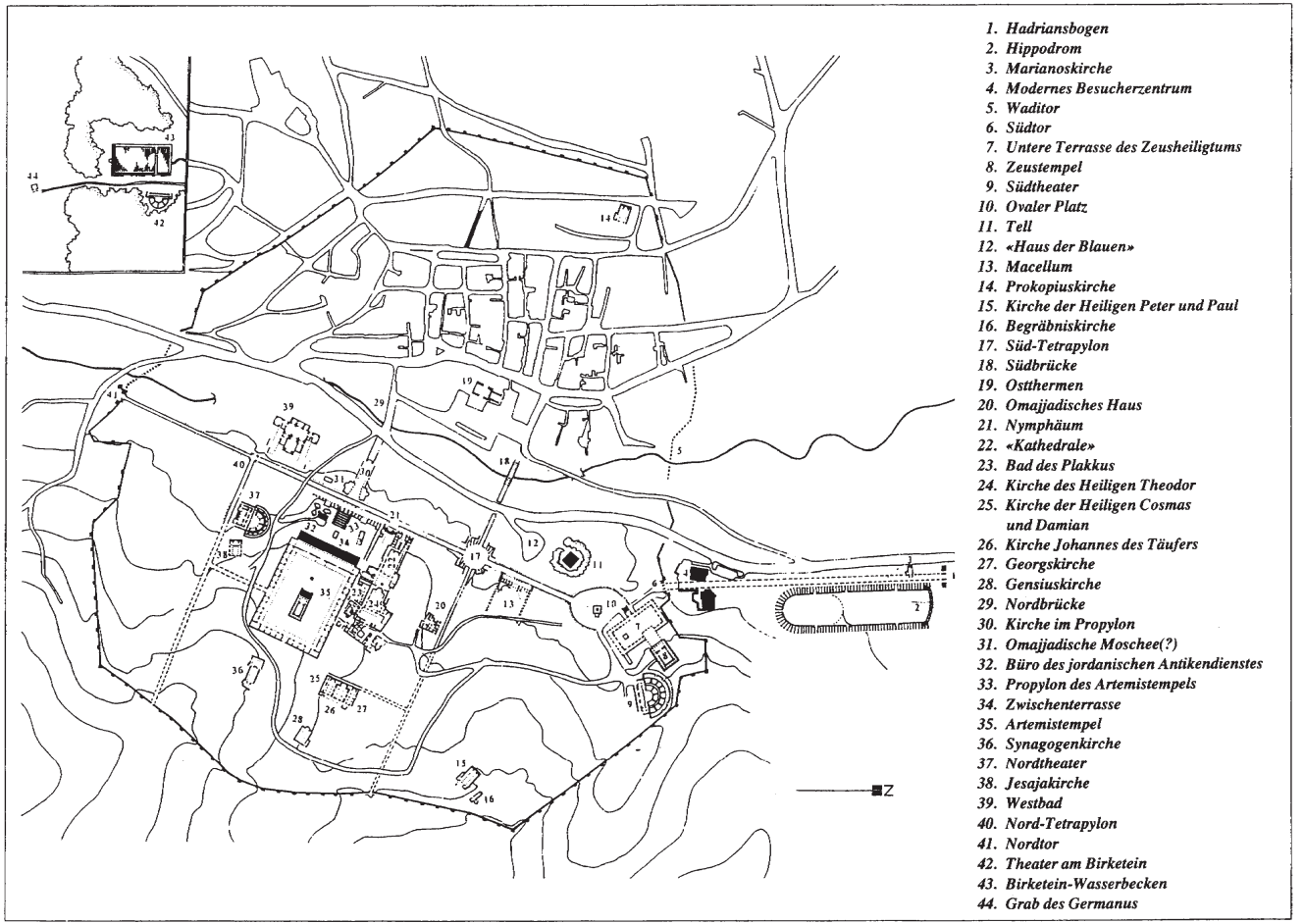

Plate XLVIII Plan of Gerasa. After Seigne (2002), p.6, fig.2.

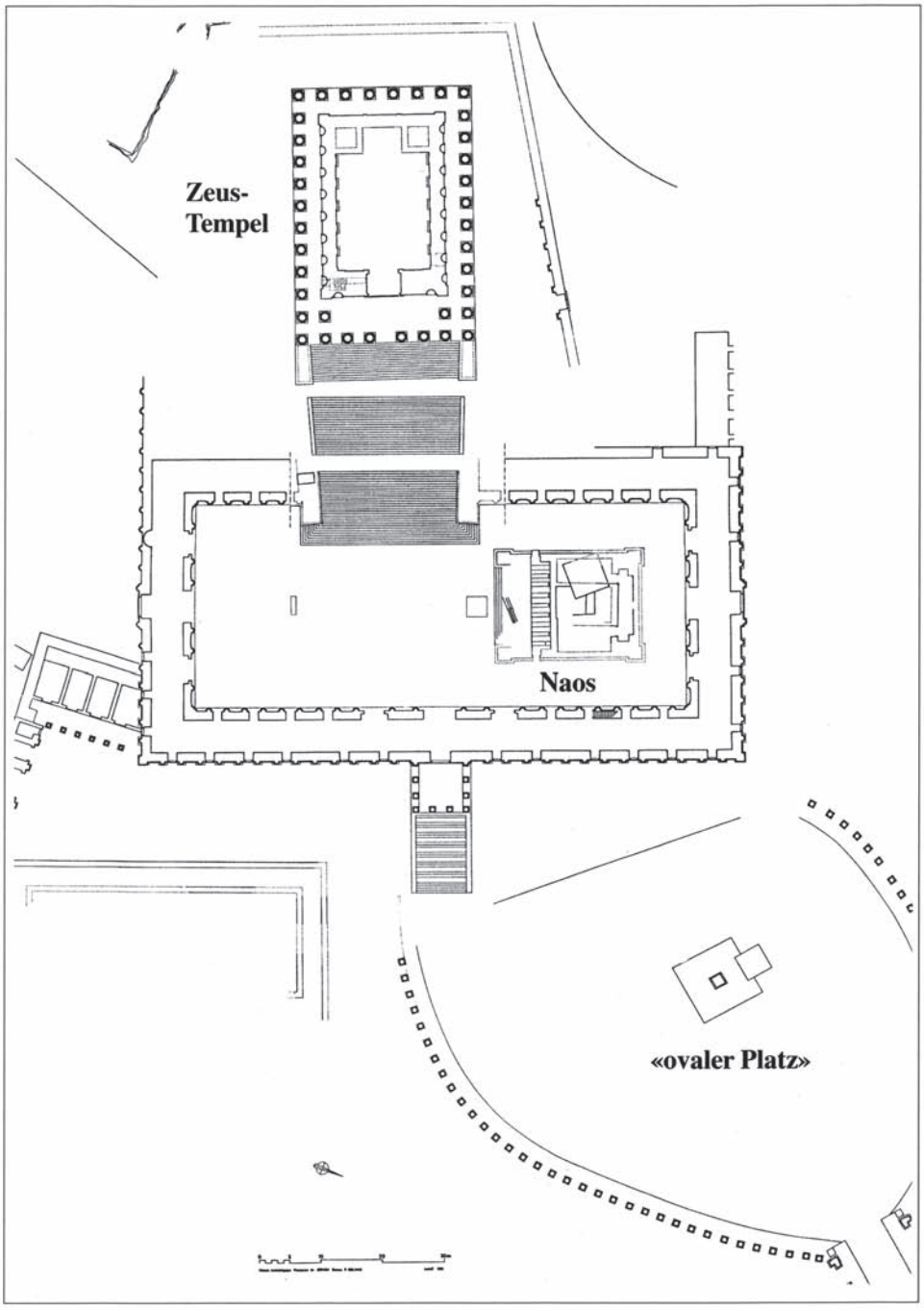

Plate XLIX Plan of the temple of Zeus Olympios at Gerasa. After Seigne (2002), p.9, fig.7.

Plate L Tetradrachm of Antiochos IV, mint of Antioch. Obverse: head of Antiochos IV, r.; reverse: Zeus Olympios: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ (to r.); ΘΕΟΥ / ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ (to l.); 31mm. After Newell (1917-8), p.22, nº54.

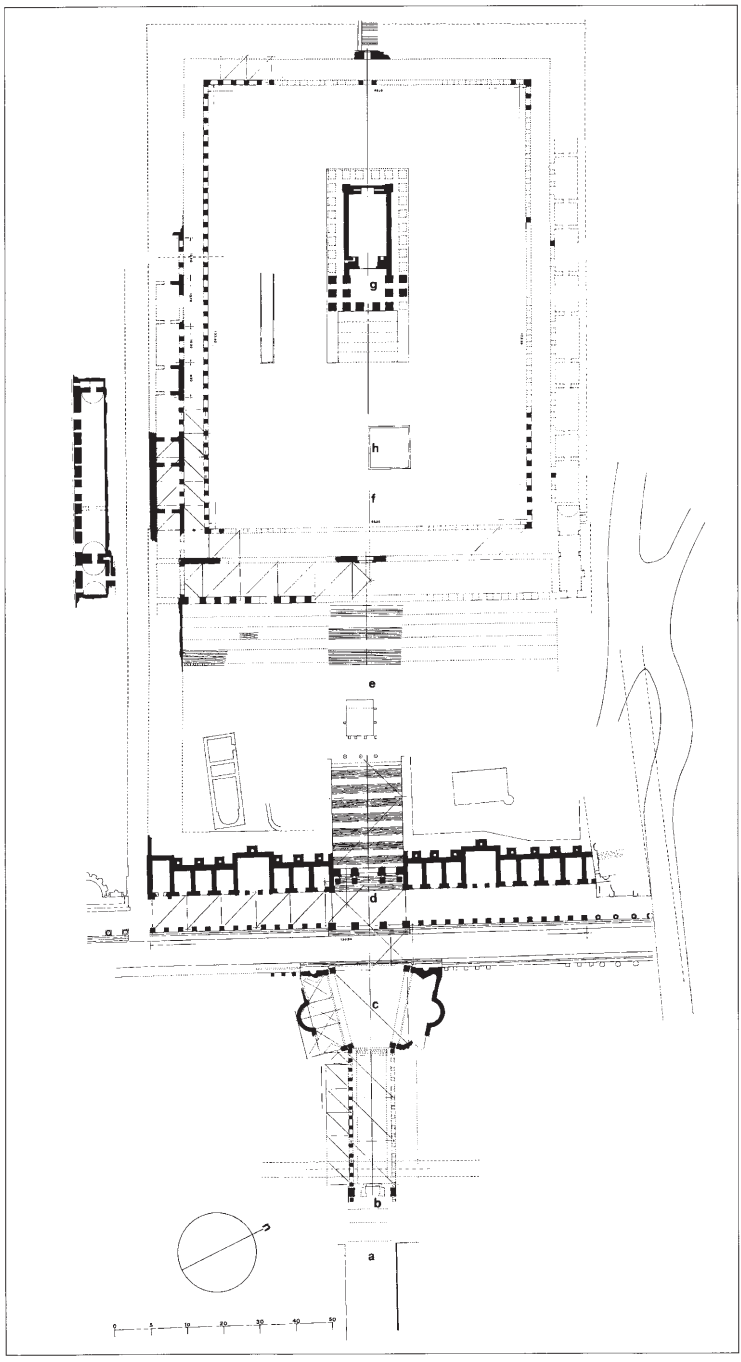

Plate LI Plan of the Artemision in Gerasa. After Parapetti (2002), p.26, fig.34.

Plate LII Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Nero, l.; reverse: Artemis standing, r.: ΛΡ (130 = AD 67-8) ΓΕΡΑ; 11gr; 22mm. After Rosenberger (1978), p.50, nº4.

Plate LIII Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Hadrian, r.: ΔΙ (14 = AD 131-2) ΑΥΤΚΤΡ / ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΣΕΒ; reverse: bust of Artemis with bow and quiver, r.: ΡΤΕΜΙΣΤΥΧΗ; 12,81gr; 27mm. After Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., *Mail Bid Sale* 61, Closing Wednesday, September 25, 2002, p.93 Lot 1070. For the coin's date, see Stein (1990), p.185-6.

Plate LIV Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Commodus, r.: ΑΥΤ Κ Λ ΑΥΡ / ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΝ; reverse: Artemis as huntress, r.: ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ ΤΥ / ΧΗ / ΓΕΡΑΣΩΝ; 14,67gr; 26mm. After Spijkerman (1978), p.162-3, nº20.

Plate LV Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Elagabalus, r.: ΑΥΤ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ; reverse: Artemis standing, r., in distyle temple: ΓΕΡΑΣ; 5,6gr; 16mm. After Lichtenberger (2003), p.453, MZ108.

Plate LVI Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Zeus, r.; reverse: cornucopiae: LΛP (130 = AD 67-8) ΓΕ / ΡΑΣΑ; 3,53gr; 15mm. After Spijkerman (1978), p.158-9, nº1.

Plate LVII Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Tyche, r.; reverse: laurel-wreath: LΛP (130 = AD 67/68) ΓΕΡΑ / ΣΑ; 8,53gr; 16/18mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.158-9, nº2.

Plate LVIII Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Marcus Aurelius, r.: ΑΥΤ ΚΑΙΣ Μ / ΑΥΡ ΑΝΤΩ; Reverse: Tyche standing, behind her, at r., male figure holding spear: ΑΝΤΩΠΡ / ΧΡΤΩΠΡΓΕ; 7,84gr; 22/24mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.160-1, nº9.

Plate LIX Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Lucius Verus, l.: ΑΥΤΟΚ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ / ΛΟΥΚΙ ΟΥΗ; reverse: Tyche standing, behind her, at r., male figure holding spear: ΑΝΤΩΠΡΧ / ΡΤ / Ω / ΠΡ / ΓΕ; 11,09gr; 25/24mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.160-1, nº16.

Plate LX Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Marcus Aurelius, r.: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ / ΑΥΡ ΑΝΤ; reverse: Tyche type Antioch: ΑΝΤΩΠΡΧ / ΡΤΩΠΡΓΕ; 17mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.160-1, nº11.

Plate LXI Gad relief from Dura Europos, Yale University Art Gallery. 1938.5314. © T. Kaizer.

Plate LXII Bronze coin of Caesarea ad Libanum from the time of Elagabalus. Reverse: tetrastyle temple with Tyche being crowned by Alexander the Great: COLCES, in ex: ΑΛ; 6,94gr; 24/27mm. Cf. Hill (1910), p.110, nº8.

Plate LXIII Bronze coin of Gerasa. Obverse: bust of Elagabalus, r.: ΑΥΤΟ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΣ; reverse: bust of Alexander the Great, r.: ΝΔΡΟΣ ΜΑΚΕΔΩ; 6,48gr; 18mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.166-7, nº35.

Plate LXIV Bronze coin of Hippos. Obverse: bust of Elagabalus, r.: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ / ΑΝΤΩΝΕΙ; reverse: Zeus Arotesios in tetrastyle temple: ΑΝΤΙΟΧ ΠΡ ΙΠ ΙΕΡ ΑΣΥΛ, in pediment ΖΕΥΣ; 12,45gr; 29/30mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.176-7, nº29.

Plate LXV Bronze coin of Hippos. Obverse: bust of Faustina Minor, r.: ΦΑΥΣ-ΤΕΙΝΑ / ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ: reverse: Zeus Olympios, r.: ΑΝΤΙΠ / ΡΙΠΙΕΡ / ΑΣ; 6,71gr; 20mm. Cf. Martini (1992), p.468, nº1094.

Plate LXVI Bronze coin of Gadara. Obverse: bust of Lucius Verus, r.: ΑΥΤ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ / Λ ΑΥΡ ΟΥΗΡΟΣ; reverse: laureated bust of Heracles with thunderbolt, r.: ΠΟ[Μ]ΓΑ / ΔΑΡ ΣΚΣ (226 = AD 162/3);12,60gr.; 27/28mm. Cf. Sternberg (1998), p.54, nº416.

Plate LXVII Bronze coin of Gadara. Obvers: bust of Elagabalus, r.: ΑΥΤ Κ ΜΑ / ΤΩΝΙΝΟΣ; reverse: Heracles with thunderbolt fighting snake-like monster: ΓΑΔΑΡ / ΕΩΝ / Κ Σ Ι Α ΑΥ; 10,24gr; 24/26mm. Cf. Spijkerman (1978), p.150-1, nº80.

Plate LXVIII Bronze coin of Gadara. Obverse: bust of Lucius Verus, r.: ΑΥΤΚΑΙ-ΣΑΡΑ / ΑΥΠΟΥΗΡΟΣ; reverse: Zeus Olympios, l. in tetrastyle temple: ΠΟΓΑ-ΔΑΡΕΩΝ / ΚΣΥ / / ΙΑΑ, in pediment ΕΚΣ (225 = AD 161/2); 10,50gr; 27mm. Cf. Classical Numismatic Group (2003), p.100, Lot 727.

Plate LXIX Denar from an eastern mint (Antioch?). Obverse: bust of Elagabalus, r.: *ANTONINVS PIVS FEL AVG*; reverse: Sol rad. walking r., in his r. hand thunderbolt, l. hand with flowing cloak: *SOLIPRO / P / VGNATORI*; 3,65gr; 18mm. Cf. Lanz, *Numismatik Lanz München, Auktion 102. Münzen der Antike.* 28. Mai 2001, p.88, nº804.

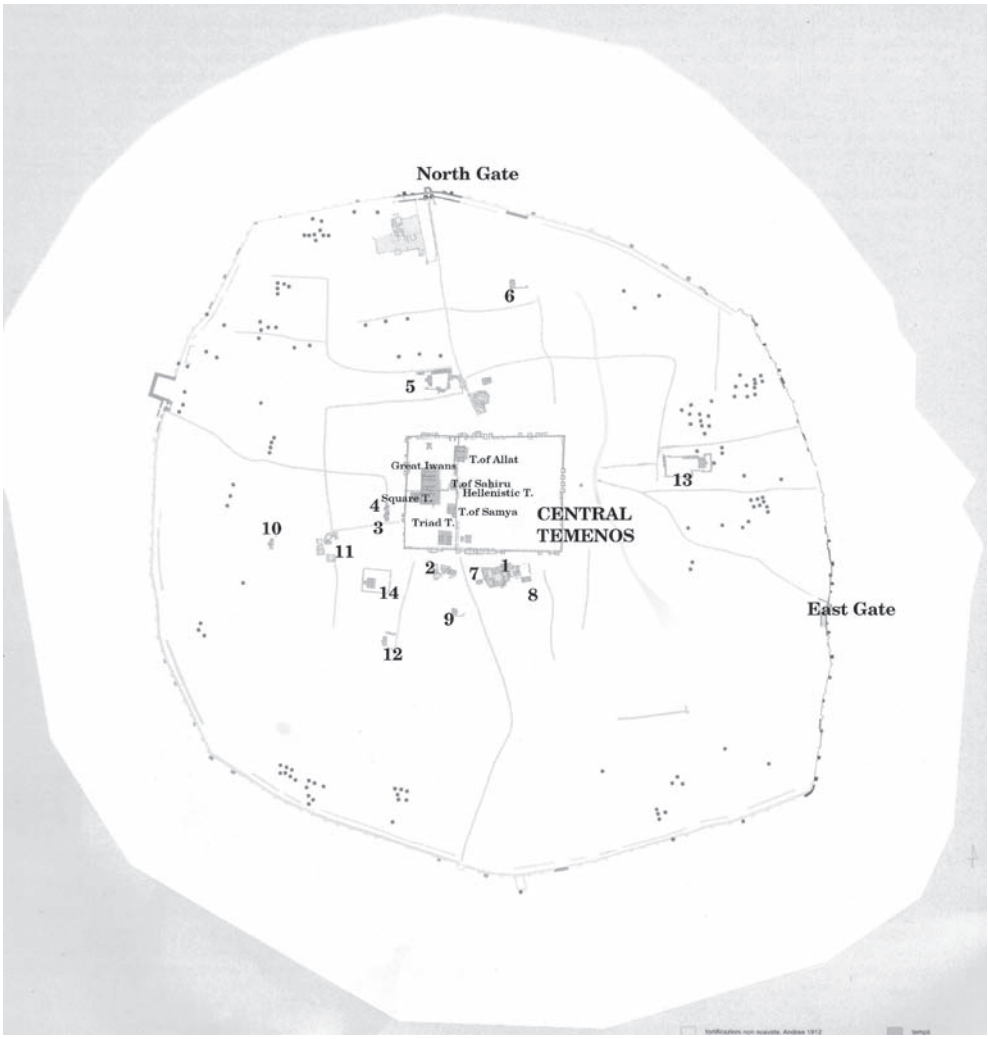

Plate LXX Groundplan of Hatra.

Plate LXXI Life-size statue of a Hatrene king. Drawing © L. Dirven.

Plate LXXII Life-size statue of a Hatrene prince (Abdsamya?) from the Square Temple in the central temple complex. Drawing © L. Dirven.

Plate LXXIII Life-size statue of the priest Bara from Temple 5. Drawing © L. Dirven.

Plate LXXIV Life-size statue of a military from Temple 4. Drawing © L. Dirven.

Plate LXXV Life-size statue of a Hatrene noble, with scroll or moneybag, from Temple 3. Drawing © Sylvia Winckelmann.

Plate LXXVI Life-size statue of princess Dushfari from Temple 5. Drawing © L. Dirven.